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EDITORIAL

In years past The Mennonite Quarterly Review has published a number of valuable articles from the pen of Johann Loserth. The article in the present issue, published eleven years after Loserth's death, was found among the papers of the late John Horsch. Robert Friedmann, whose work is well known to readers of the Review, and whose scholarship has been directed especially to the Hutterites, has translated and edited the manuscript and added valuable critical notes of his own.

That Mennonite Communities have unique and valuable qualities is known to all historians and sociologists familiar with Mennonite life. It is a fact, however, that the historical and analytical study of specific Mennonite communities remains largely an undeveloped field. The present article by J. Howard Kauffman, treating the growth of the community at Fairview, Michigan, is therefore a welcome contribution.

In the two final articles of this issue, John C. Wenger continues his translation of Anabaptist tracts and Silas Hertzler his statistical studies of Mennonite schools. For many years Professor Hertzler has given the readers of the Review a statistical analysis of attendance at Mennonite Schools and Colleges. "Schools" in these studies has included academies and Bible schools. In recent years, however, there has been a significant development of Mennonite schools in the elementary field, mostly of the day-school type. A few of these schools include some high-school work. In the present article Professor Hertzler gives an analysis of these newer schools for the past three years. In an early issue, the Review hopes to print his regular annual report on Mennonite Schools and Colleges for the school year 1946-47. —G. F. H.

The Mennonite Quarterly Review

Vol. XXI No. 4

THE ANABAPTISTS IN CARINTHIA IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

JOHANN LOSERTH († 1936)

(Translated and edited by Robert Friedmann)

Among the different groups in Germany in the third decade of the sixteenth century which desired a thorough reform of the church, none was more vigorous and appealing than the one called by its adversaries "Anabaptist" which consisted in reality of a great number of small, at first unrelated groups of earnest Christians. They fell into bad repute when their most extreme branch became guilty of the well-known excesses at the city of Münster, actions with which the other groups had nothing in common and which they condemned in the strongest terms. The reforms which the [evangelical]* Anabaptist sought went far beyond those proposed by Luther or Zwingli. Although it has been said of the latter even in our time that he repudiated everything which was not expressly commanded in the Bible, the fact remains that even he stopped short of adult baptism or, as it was called in those days, the *Wiedertaufe*. The truth is that it was the Anabaptists rather than Zwingli who followed this scriptural principle, and they did so not only in their church life proper but also in their economic and political attitudes. They demanded the unadulterated teachings of the Gospel and required a life like that of the early Christians, with a church similar to that of the disciples in Jerusalem and with missionaries who should work as the first apostles worked.

*All parts in brackets are additions by the translator.

This Anabaptist movement enlisted followers from all walks of life. The majority came from the simple rural population; but also city people of the middle class, and ocasionally even noblemen, such as the Liechtensteins and Wolkensteins, felt deeply attracted by their message. The nobility, indeed, were most favorably disposed toward these new Christians.

Today we are fairly well informed about their spread in Switzerland and the Tyrol, and particularly in Moravia where the Anabaptists succeeded in building up their own peculiar system of community of goods [Hutterites].[1] We also know all the intricate details of the tense struggle between the Tyrolese government and the Anabaptists, and of the untiring efforts of the Habsburgs to stem this movement in the several Austrian provinces of their domain.

Among these provinces Carinthia *(Kärnten)* was perhaps the least infected. And yet, here also Anabaptism struck roots, finding entrance from the Tyrol. We do not know too much about its beginnings here.[2] Among the Anabaptist brethren who were captured in the city of Augsburg (Bavaria) in 1528 and cross-examined, the records mention one Kaspar Mailänder, a tailor from Neustadt in Carinthia.[3] Then we learn of a letter of the Emperor Charles V, who on April 4, 1525, wrote from Seville (Spain) to the nobles of Carinthia that they must not oppose the orders of his brother Ferdinand [of Austria] regarding the heretics [Anabaptists]. In the year 1531 we learn that in the town of Wolfsberg, Carinthia, three Anabaptists were executed. As their teacher one Balthasar Maier is named. A mandate of Ferdinand I of May 7, 1532, to the governor of Carinthia, Veith Weltzer,[4] and the orders of this governor to all lower instances [of the provincial government] to search out the Anabaptists, seize them, and proceed against them according to earlier orders, are evidence that the Anabaptist movement had actually spread among at least a certain part of the population of Carinthia. Another mandate of Ferdinand I of

[1] See Johann Loserth, "Der Kommunismus der Mährischen Wiedertäufer im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert," *Archiv für österreichische Geschichte,* Vienna, 1894, 135-322, and A. H. Newman, *A History of Antipedobaptism from the Rise of Pedobaptism to A. D. 1609* (Philadelphia, 1897). [More recent, John Horsch, *The Hutterian Brethren, 1528-1928, a Story of Martyrdom and Loyalty,* (Goshen, Ind., 1929). All footnotes in brackets are additions by the translator.—R. F.]

[2] For Carinthia we have but one single reference, namely, the study by Joseph Ritter von Beck, "Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Wiedertäufer in Kärnten," *Archiv des historischen Vereins für Kärnten,* XI (1867), which among other material also contains a complete reprint of Erfordter's *Urlaubsbrief* of 1538. [More recent, yet still incomplete, is the article "Kärnten" by Loserth in the *Mennonitisches Lexikon,* II, 465-468.—R. F.]

[3] München, *Staatsarchiv, Ansbacher Akten.*

[4] For the full text of this mandate of 1532 see the appendix to this article.

February 15, 1535, against "the new and seducing sect" was likewise made public in Carinthia. It ordered that "everyone who has come of age be asked to go to the confessional during Lent and to receive the most blessed sacrament."[5] These mandates were repeated several times, and the government of the province sought ways and means to ferret out Anabaptists and bring them to bay. It was about the same situation as in the adjacent province of Styria *(Steiermark)*, where we learn of the following revealing report, issued by the vicegerent Michael Meixner on September 3, 1537: "There has not been a suffragan bishop (assistant bishop) for forty years, which is much decried throughout the country. People speak much of the sacrament of confirmation, but there is no bishop to administer it. Consequently, certain Christians think lightly of the sacrament and speak of it mockingly, which is only to the advantage of the Anabaptists and other sectarians."

A report of the Estates of Carinthia *(Landstände)* issued in Klagenfurt, December 10, 1537, speaks in the same vein and reveals clearly the ecclesiastical conditions in this province at that time. It is entitled "Answer of the Estates of Carinthia upon the gracious request of His Roman Imperial Majesty" *(Auf der Römischen Kays. Majestät genedig Begeren der Landschaft in Kärnten Antwort)*, and contains the demand for a "national" church-council for the German countries[6] to cope with the abuses which have taken root [in the Catholic Church]. This presentation is connected with events in the provincial diet *(Landtag)* of that year where these very unpleasant ecclesiastical conditions had been discussed. On September 15, 1537, the Estates had submitted to King Ferdinand I (in Vienna) the complaint that they had been slandered for tolerating Lutheran and other seducing preachers in several cities of the country such as St. Veith, Völkermarkt, and Klagenfurt,[7] and that even some of the nobility have supported such preachers [in their domain]. The Estates petition the king

[5] A copy of the printed mandate of 1535 is in the Beck collection of Anabaptistica in the State Archives in Brno (Brünn), Moravia, Czechoslovakia. On the margin of this copy one finds the handwritten remark of about the same time: "Diss general [mandat] soll [man] durch das gantz Viertl in Oberkärndten durchaus anzaigt und verlesen lassen."

[6] [Of the Holy Roman Empire. "National" is used here in contrast to "universal" such as the former church councils had been and also as later on the Council of Trent was organized (1545-1563). France had "national" (Catholic) church councils as early as the fifteenth century, while Germany never saw one. That was one of its greatest handicaps.—R. F.]

[7] [Klagenfurt is the capital of Carinthia and the seat of the provincial diet (*Landtag*) and the provincial governor (*Landeshauptmann*). The population today is about 30,000. Carinthia was a part of the Austrian *Erblande* (Habsburg domain). —R. F.]

to give them a capable clergy and persons qualified to inspect all parish priests, vicars, and beneficiaries. Then one will become more aware how bad things are in church matters.

It is true, Anabaptism never took as deep roots in Carinthia as in the Tyrol; aggressive believers in the new way are found there only sporadically. The records tell us, for instance, of two brothers, Matthias Peckh and Jakob Tauferer, who recanted before the Vicegerent of Friesach, Franz von Tannhausen, whereupon they were granted pardon.[8] On the other hand, the well-known Chronicle of the Hutterites contains the story of two other brothers, Hans Seidel and Hans Donner, who were caught in the city of St. Veith (Carinthia) on Wednesday before Christmas, 1538, and soon afterward executed by the sword. Of them the Chronicle says: "They have testified to the truth unto death in a knightly manner *(ritterlich)*. They did not deviate from this truth as long as they could keep their eyes open and their breath going" *(solange das Schnaufen in ihren Nasen gewesen)*.[9] Of these two martyrs a moving farewell letter to the congregation in Moravia is still extant, likewise a hymn of Hans Donner, "Ich dank dir, lieber Herr, mein Gott" to the tune, "Ungnad begehr ich nicht."[10]

There is evidence that this city of St. Veith showed quite an alert spirit concerning church reforms. We learn, for instance, of "heretical" books which were on sale there, and on October 25, 1537, the county clerk *(Pfleger)*, Hans Knysler, sent an elaborate report about this matter to the king in Vienna stating that the book-salesmen from whom he had confiscated these books have been put in chains, but he does not know what should be done with them now, or whether he should send the books up to His Majesty. He further reveals that there are friends of the new teaching even within the [county-] council itself.[11]

The most important of all the Anabaptists of Carinthia was no doubt the well-known brother Antoni Erfordter.[12] From his

[8] The original record with three attached seals is in the Provincial Archives of Styria at Graz.

[9] *Geschichtbücher der Wiedertäufer in Oesterreich-Ungarn*, (ed. Beck) *Fontes Rerum Austriacarum*, 2. Abteilung, 43. Band, (Wien, 1883), 141-142. [Later editions of the original Chronicle: Rudolf Wolkan, Vienna, 1923, and A. J. F. Zieglschmid, Philadelphia, 1943.—R. F.]

[10] Published in *Die Lieder der Hutterischen Brüder*, (Scottdale, Pa., 1914), 88-89. [About Hans Donner cf. article by Loserth in Menn. Lex., I, 462 f.—R. F.]

[11] Original copy in the Beck collection in Brno, Moravia.

[12] [See Menn. Lex., I, 605f, article "Erfordter" by Loserth. The *Geschicht Buch der Hutterischen Brüder* (in either edition) contains new material concerning the life of Antoni Erfordter which was unknown at the time when the article in the Menn. Lex. was published.—R. F.]

pen we have a remarkable farewell letter *(Urlaubsbrief)* of 1538, written in his "home in Klagenfurt on the eve of his departure to the [Hutterite] church in Moravia,"[13] This great *Urlaubsbrief* is a kind of penitential sermon, a reprimand against the immorality and weakness in faith of his contemporaries, particularly the wealthy and the parsons who "commit idolatry and lie on couches." J. von Beck, who first published this letter,[14] says of it: "Erfordter here strikes at the Lutherans just as much as the Catholics. Its language occasionally surpasses the rudeness of a Luther." His invectives are directed first at the clergy which "always praises the divine law with high words but never practices even a bit of it by deeds"; next to the sovereign and his subjects, "who are well aware of their [the clergy's] treacherous villainy and yet roar with them." "Of that kind," Erfordter continues, "is the entire crowd of papist and Lutheran scribes. They all sin in hope of God's mercy, and do not get out of their old socks."[15] "What is your yoke and your cross with which you might chastise your flesh? It is nothing but gorging and boozing, gambling and fornicating. The root, however, of all these vices is idolatry which you commit by worshipping simple bread as God, placing him in a small closet and kneeling down before it. Just tell us which apostle ever celebrated the Lord's Supper in gold, velvet and silken attire? What blasphemies in church and home, in streets and alleys, with all your Masses and Matins,[16] your Complines,[16] your funeral processions and funeral chants,[17]

[13] *Urlaub-Brüeff Antoni Erfordters, an die zu Klagenfurt geschrieben in Kärndten und überantwortet. Datum Klagenfurt, in meinem Haus im Monat Septembris Anno 1538 Jar. Anthonius Erfordter, ein überzeugter Christ, unnützer Knecht des Herrn.* Several copies of this letter are known, for instance in a Hutterite codex at the Studienbibliothek of Olomouc, Moravia, and in three different codices in Bratislava, Slovakia [most likely now lost. Part of the letter was also published by Lydia Müller in *Glaubenszeugnisse Oberdeutscher Taufgesinnten* (Leipzig, 1938) 258-262. R. F.]

[14] Joseph von Beck, in *Archiv des historischen Vereins für Kärnten,* XI, (1867), 7.

[15] [*"Sie bleiben in den alten Schuhen stecken."* Apparently a contemporaneous idiom.—R. F.]

[16] [*Matins,* a devotional service or "office" of the Catholic Church which constitutes the first of the "canonical hours" of the day. In monasteries it is a solemn choral service usually sung between midnight and dawn. Among the pastoral clergy the office may be said by anticipation on the evening before. In the sixteenth century the Matins meant also the public Sunday service preceding the first Mass. *Compline* (later also *Completa*) means the religious exercise which completes and closes the service of the day. It is the seventh and last of the "Canonical Hours," the last liturgical prayer of the day, said after nightfall, or, in monasteries just before retiring; sometimes it is also called "night song." As for the "Canonical Hours" one might consult the article "Breviary" in the *Catholic Encyclopedia.* This Breviary contains the liturgical prayers for all the canonical hours of the day, the so-called offices: prime, terce, sext, none, vespers, night vigils (matins and lauds), and at nightfall compline.—R. F.]

[17] [*Totengesänge* (funeral chants): it was customary to chant the Psalter beside the dead man at his home, particularly Psalm 130: *De Profundis.*—R. F.]

your consecration of wine, water, flat cakes,[18] eggs, salt, tapers, bells, guns, your infant baptism, and the like more. Christ teaches to baptize the believers; you, however, just reverse it and baptize the unbelievers [he means small children]. For you the adoration of the virgin Mary and the saints stands higher than the worship of God. That is the way your bands *(Rotten)* behave, such as the Congregation of Our Lady, the monks of St. Sebastian and St. Erhard, and so on and so on. They know nothing more praiseworthy than to gorge, booze, and fornicate, as soon as the service is over. . . . Each band[19] has its own form of dress and ceremonies, its customs and its beliefs, but they know nothing about [genuine] baptism, the Lord's Supper, its inner working, and of the true and right Christian faith by and large. What kind of fruits then may one expect from them? But thou, king [Ferdinand] and you, Lords of the country, you should observe how these sects[20] manipulate [or behave] all over the country, eat up the goods and chattels of their fellow-men and fleece all the world down to its marrow." Ferdinand I is particularly attacked because he persecutes and outlaws Christ in his members [i.e., the Anabaptists]. "After all, thou, too, art nothing but a human being, dust and ashes, food of worms and a shadow on the wall. And yet, they make public [your] mandates that one must neither say nor write nor sing the name of Jesus." Next the authorities are aimed at. "If they are not good, how, then, will the subjects know how to pray well? They have a vicegerent *(Vitztum)* here [on the ecclesiastical estates] but he is nothing but a public fornicator. Likewise the Lords who sit in council and court, and the priests and the officers of the temple *(Tempelknechte);* they all are arrogant, avaricious, bloodthirsty, and drunken blasphemers and gamblers, not pastors but wolves, all in all a concentrate of vices *(ein Usberguss aller Laster)."* In this tone he continues. He has the kind of eloquence which the common man understands, and which he will accept the easier the more striking the description appears to him compared with his everyday experiences. One should keep in mind that in those days[21] the estates in the provincial diet speak in the same manner, asking redress for all this ecclesiastical misery. Klagenfurt in particular, the capital of Carinthia and Erfordter's home, has an

[18] [*Fladen*: a kind of thin hard rye (or barley) bread not unlike shipbiscuit, widely eaten in the Alpine countries.—R. F.]

[19] [Here he aims at the monks and friars.—R. F.]

[20] [He refers here to the regulated clergy.—R. F.]

[21] [First half of the sixteenth century, prior to the Council of Trent (1545-1563) which, in fact, meant the great turning point in all ecclesiastical affairs.—R. F.]

evil repute in this respect. In one portion of his letter Erfordter quotes a contemporary saying that "one single dove can carry away on her back across the walls of the city all the Christians living in Klagenfurt."

Erfordter then inveighs against the superstition of the time, and illustrates this by some amusing examples, thus producing a graphic picture of the morals of the age. If someone should find the examples concerning the love of pleasure of the clergy too strong, he should refer to the records of official inspections of certain monasteries of that time preserved in the Austrian State Archives. In such a company Erfordter does not want to keep on living. He prefers the Anabaptist brothers Donner and Brandl. For this loyalty, he reports, they had thrown him into jail. There, by the threat to immure him, the "pagan and cruel fellows *(Wüteriche)* compelled me to call the confession of these two men of God a sect and seduction." He did so "out of weakness of the flesh and the spirit," and because his wife, his children, and all his relatives pressed him. But now he suffers under this lapse, and he intends to recant today and at any day and to confess loudly "that the teaching of these men is thoroughly scriptural and therefore the pure and well-founded truth." "You bags full of maggots,"[22] he shouts at the clergy, "instead of suffering for the sake of the Gospel you do not permit one hair of your head to be hurt, and you will not let a single penny be withheld from you. The canon Simon Graber of Völkermarkt, a most ecclesiastical *(geistlich)* lord and a good fencer, once remarked that if someone should overreach him by only one penny he would not let him slip by. The canon might find such a rule perhaps in the *epistolis facultatis juridicae (et fallaciae,* as he adds) but not in the epistles of the apostle Paul, for they tell you something totally different. The conditions of the clergy in general, however, might be recognized from the fact that nobody does so much calculating all the time as they. If right would prevail, the governor or regent [of Carinthia] should have them driven out of the country with clubs, and should order them to study the index of the Holy Bible where they might find what belongs to their office. But the 'carry your cross' of these un-spiritual lords can be found only on their cudgels and their pikes. Their renunciation concerns only the poor life [of a disciple of Christ]. Much feasting and little fasting; jackets of velvet and dandy breeches, silken cowls, beds with canopy and

22 [*Madensack,* a popular invective.—R. F.]

hanging lamps, drunkenness at the time of the Compline,[23] and rarely up to the Matins,[23] that is their 'difficult rule and hard life,' and it is so strict that many a clergyman can scarcely succeed in being sober for two hours within three days."

"These are the wolves," exclaims Erfordter, "the true torment for us, poor hounded sheep of Christ who are nowhere at home and who have nowhere a refuge, neither in wood nor field, neither in street nor alley. Cobblers and tinkers, charcoal burners and peasants, yea simple and plain women, are nowadays greater scholars before God than this crowd of clergymen. How does it happen that the simple ones know more than the learned men? Because knowing the right thing and not doing it is the same as not knowing it. Owning an unused treasure is the same as a hidden treasure of which one knows nothing. Take heed, you authorities, whether not Pilate was even better than you, for Pilate at least recognized Christ as just and without any guilt." There is only one person among these lords who finds recognition and praise by Erfordter, namely, the governor of Styria, Hans Ungnad.[24] "I know him," he writes, "they say of him he would rather give up his high office than kill a man for the sake of his belief. God give him mercy."

In such lurid colors Erfordter depicts the conditions under which Anabaptism struck roots, though not always too successfully. He is aware of this lack of deeper response at least in Carinthia, and tries to explain it. "Do not be surprised that here in Klagenfurt, Villach, St. Veith, or Völkermarkt, perhaps in all of Carinthia, you can scarcely find one or two earnest Christians. This is the very reason why I am going away from you. At a place where there is no Gospel and no fear of God, no faith and no love, no one can ever become godly, let alone be saved."[25]

And thus, following the trail of so many other Anabaptists, Erfordter went to Moravia where he became a minister of the Word *(Diener des Wortes)*. Of his later activities we have a few remarkable records. On December 6, 1539, an assembly of Ana-

[23] [See note 16 above.—R. F.]

[24] [He was Lutheran. See the last paragraph of this paper.—R. F.]

[25] [For a final evaluation of this letter as an "Anabaptist epistle" one must bear in mind that Erfordter wrote it as a farewell letter to the world before he actually joined the brotherhood in Moravia, that is, before he was actually under the strong influence of this community. Epistles of brethren living within this brotherhood never used such strong language—not even concerning their worst tormentors. The whole question of popular slang and uncouth expressions in this literature is discussed by Robert Friedmann, "The Epistles of the Hutterian Brethren," *Menn. Quart. Rev.*, XX (July, 1946), 164 and note 33. Erfordter's letter is almost unique in this regard. —R. F.]

baptists in Steinabrunn [Lower Austria, not far from the Moravian border] was attacked and one hundred and thirty-six prisoners were brought into the dungeon of the near-by castle of Falkenstein. To them Erfordter addressed a moving letter of comfort (1540). "I wish," he writes, "God would permit me to serve you and to die for you."

Erfordter is also the author of some particularly beautiful hymns and he has the reputation of being one of the best poets among the Hutterites. In one of these hymns he praises the deeds of the great Anabaptist martyrs and describes the suffering of the prisoners (most of whom never returned) in the tune of an older song, "By the Rivers of Babylon."[26] Just as one drives sheep to the butcher, thus they drive brethren and sisters in great numbers, separating them from each other.

Ihr Herz war Leids und Trauerns voll,
Dass man also tät scheiden
Den Mann vom Weib, die Freund entzwei,
Die Kind von ihrer Mutter Leib,
Ach Gott, da war gross Leiden. . . .

In his hymn, "Ach Gott, wem soll ichs klagen?", he depicts again the excruciating suffering of the brethren and their way of living under perpetual persecution.

Nicht einen lässt man leben,
Der fromm und redlich ist,
Keine Gnad wird ihm gegeben,
Besteht er als frommer Christ.
Er muss gekreuzigt werden,
Gesträngt, geplagt mit Zwang,
Kein Frist wird ihm auf Erden,
Nur Mord ist ihr Gesang. . . .[27]

His best-known hymn, however, is the beautiful song, "Ich armes Brüderlein klag mich sehr." In it he describes his own distress. As the sixth stanza reveals, it originated in those days of 1538 when he said farewell to his home country, his wife, and all his fellow believers.

Ach Weh und Ach und immer Weh
Denen, die wohnen auf Erden.
Kein Treu, kein Lieb, kein Glauben mehr,
Kein Frommen findt man mehr.
Das Best ist wie ein Dorn so scharf
In aller Welt gemeine,
Drum will ich nun gesellen mich
Zum frommen Gesind
Wo ich sie find
Weib, Kind, lass ich alleine.[28]

[26] Rudolf Wolkan, *Die Lieder der Wiedertäufer* (Berlin, 1903), 173-178. Also *Lieder der Hutterischen Brüder* (Scottdale, Pa., 1914), 103-105.

[27] *Die Lieder der Hutterischen Brüder,* 108.

[28] "Ich armes Brüderlein": *Lieder der Hutterischen Brüder,* 110. Beck printed this hymn in his study referred to in note 2, p. 24; likewise Wolkan, *loc. cit.,* 174f.

[He was not to enjoy very long the new fellowship for which he had given up so much. Only two years after coming to Moravia,] in 1541, he died; we do not know exactly in which of the several Hutterite colonies of Southern Moravia.

[In the meantime more people became Anabaptists in Carinthia.] In one of his epistles of 1540, Hans Amon, then the *Vorsteher* of the entire Hutterite brotherhood, mentions two of them. "Lamprecht Kreuzthaler and Caspar Schmidt," he writes to the exiles in Trieste [the former Falkenstein prisoners], "are still in Carinthia, or they may be already in Styria. We expect them daily, and at the moment do not know how they are faring. Michel Schneider and Hänsel Coll are in their homeland again."

The Austrian government, however, was not slow in the persecution of all non-Catholics, Lutherans and Anabaptists alike. And yet, the latter grew and spread nonetheless. In the western part of Carinthia, not far from the Tyrolean border, in the village of Ortenburg, one of those small, but active clandestine congregations of Anabaptists existed. It's minister *(Vorsteher)* was the brother Michael Madschidl, often also called Kleinmichel [short Michel].[29] Of him the Hutterite Chronicle has much to report. Together with his wife and a cobbler by the name of Hans Gurtzheim, he was taken prisoner and cross-examined.[30] Two priests from Villach worked hard to convert these prisoners, but "they received an answer which tasted not too good." And then the Chronicle adds, almost untranslatably, *"Sie täten sich gar bald abstossen und zogen mit Schande davon."* The prisoners were now put into chains and transferred to a jail in far-off Vienna. Here they met four fellow believers, one of them by the name of Hans Staudach, who after the day of St. Matthew "were led to the slaughtering bench." Their death was later glorified in a hymn by the above-named Hans Gurtzheim of Carinthia.

(Sie) Waren fest wie eine Mauer,
Bereitet zu dem Schwert,
Der Henker stand in Trauer,
Keines Richtens er begehrt.

Nun sei keck, lieber Freimann mein,
Gott wöll Dir's verzeihn,
Und uns gnädig sein. . . .

Madschidl likewise held steadfastly to his beliefs during the long time of his imprisonment. In his beautiful epistle to the com-

[29] [See the article "Matschidl" in *Menn. Lex.*, III, 50, by Chr. Neff with new material from the Chronicle (ed. Wolkan, 1923), not known to Loserth at the time of the draft of the present study.—R. F.]

[30] Hans Gurtzheim described this event in a hymn, *"Nun wöllt ihr hören singen . . . ,"* printed in *Lieder der Hutterischen Brüder,* 136f., and *Arch. des Hist. Ver. f. Kärnten* (1867), pp. 31-36.

munity in Moravia he writes, "Do not expect from me and my fellow-prisoners anything but the right behavior. We intend to stay loyal to the Lord unto death." Yet he was spared martyrdom and was to find a peaceful and quiet end. Three years had elapsed since he was taken prisoner in Ortenburg when a great fire broke out in Vienna. "Then they closed the city gates," the Hutterite Chronicle reports, "as it was customary in the city of Vienna on occasion of fires, and they freed the prisoners. While people were busy extinguishing the fire, Kleinmichel and his wife Lisl escaped from the city by the providence of God and the aid of a kind-hearted citizen of Vienna, and went on to the community in Moravia. . . . In this way God gave them a living, with their conscience unhurt and clean."[31] "Gurtzheim, however, went back to his prison where he stayed for another year. Then he was drowned in the Danube, July 27."[32]

Madschidl died at Altenmarkt in Moravia in 1553. The Chronicle reports for this year: "There he peacefully passed away to the Lord as an evangelical minister and apostle of Jesus Christ and of the entire church of God *(Gemein Gottes)* after he had suffered many afflictions and imprisonments."

The fact that we hear so little of Anabaptism in Carinthia and the other Austrian provinces after the middle of the century has some reason in the change of the general political situation. The Peace of Augsburg (1555) acknowledged Lutheranism in Germany to be on an equal footing with Catholicism. The Lutherans, to be sure, were the most influential group in the Habsburg domain at that time, in fact they were the very leaders in all political and military affairs. Because they were of the [erroneous] opinion that the Peace of Augsburg applied also to Austria, they were most eager to keep away every other group which deviated from the Augsburg Confession. No Calvinist, no Anabaptist, nor any other non-Lutheran Protestant should be allowed to exist, for he was to them just as much a heretic as he was to the Catholics. Lutheran broad-minded personalities, such as the one-time governor of Styria, Hans Ungnad, whose toleration was so highly praised in Erfordter's letter, now had disappeared altogether from public life. The Lutherans wanted to prove to their sovereign [Ferdinand I] their good standing as citizens so that they might be

31 [Geschicht Buch der Hutterischen Brüder (ed. Wolkan), 208.—R. F.]

32 [See article "Gurzham" by Loserth, in *Menn. Lex.*, II, 200. A very similar case took place in Hohenwittling in Württemberg where the well-known brother Paul Glock was imprisoned for nineteen years. When a fire broke out the prisoner was freed. But Glock was anxious to help extinguish the fire, and when this was done he returned to jail. His story is told in the *Geschicht-Buch* (ed. Wolkan), 379.—R. F.]

granted freedom of worship and other privileges. Thus other groups were not tolerated at all. With the conclusion of the Council of Trent (1563) and the arrival of the Jesuits [at about the same time] a new struggle set in which to a certain extent was not only religious but also political, namely, the struggle for power between the sovereign and the old feudal estates. [The Anabaptists, however, were the first victims of these rivalries and their movement was ground down both by Catholics and Lutherans, church and state, king and nobility.]

APPENDIX

The following is an order of the governor of Carinthia, Veith Weltzer, to all lower instances of the provincial government in Carinthia, issued May 22, 1532. Together with the publication of the General Mandate of King Ferdinand I against Anabaptists, given at Vienna, May 7, 1532, the governor gives orders to spy out all Anabaptists in Carinthia, to take them into custody, and to proceed against them according to the mandates issued. (Original document in J. v. Beck's collection of Anabaptistica, now in the State Archives of Brno (Brünn), Moravia, Czechoslovakia.)

Ich *Veith Weltzer,* landshaubtman in Kärndten, embeut allen und yedlichen, was stand oder namen der im fürstenthumb Kärndten ist, so aigen obrigkeit oder die zu verwallten hat, so mit disem offen brieff angelang wurd, mein willig fruntlich dienst und gruss zuvor. Die Romisch, Hungrisch und Behamisch kgl. Mt. unser allergnedigster her und landfürst hat mir der unchristlichen sect der *widertauffer* halben geschriben und zu handeln bevolhen, wie von wort zu wort hernach begriffen ist:

Ferdinand von gots genaden Romischer, zu Hungern und Behaim etc. Kunig, ertzhertzog zu Österreich, etc., Getreuer, lieber. Wiewoll wir hievor zu abstellung und ausreyttung der widertaufferischen sect durch mandat und in ander weg ernstlich furschung in unsern erblanden gethan, der hoffnung, dieselbig sect sollte dadurch abgenommen haben, und damit furkommen, das yetzo wie uns anlangt, auf der pan sein: nemlich so werden wir von mer dan ainen ort erinnert und berichtet, das sich ir vil bemelter sect verwant und anhengig zusammenthun wollen, in meinung, dieselbig ir sect mit gewalt zu erhalten. Aus denen etlich des furnemens sein sollen, in unser margraveschafft *Marhern* zu andern derselben irer sect verwandten zu ziehen und daselbst auch deshalben zu practiciren und zu handeln.

Dieweill nu solche sect, wie dir wissen ist, vill ergerlicher und lasterlicher sachen auf im tregt, und womit bei der zeit, darein mit merern ernst geschen wurdet, als noch beschehen ist, not klein zu besorgen, dieselbig werde sich dermassen erweytern und daraus thetlich handlung volgen, und zuletzt alle ober- und erberkeit in sorg und gefärlichkeit mit nachtheil understeen muste, solches aber sovil muglich ist, zu furkomen: so bevelhen wir dir ernstlich, und wellen, das du allenthalben in unserm furstenthumb Karndten deiner landtshaubtmans verwaltung auf die widertauffer vleissig

kundtschafft anrichtest und wo der vill oder wenig betretten werden, dieselben fencklich annemen und gegen dieselben inhalt unser mandat mit straff ernstlich verfarn lassest, und darinnen niemandts verschonest. Daran beschicht unser ernstliche meinung.

Geben in unser stat *Wien* am sibenden tag Maii anno 32, unserer reiche des Romischen im andern und der andern im sechsten.

Demnach so bevilch ich von ir kgl. Mt. wegen euch und eur yedlichen sonderlichen ernstlichen, ir wellet in eurn gebieten mit allem vleis eur nachfrag, aufmerkung und erfarung haben, wo ir der widertauffer aus oder mer erinnert wurd, die gefencklichen annemet, und mit in nach vermugen der kgl. Mt. bevelch handlet. Daran thuet ir der kgl. Mt. ernstlich meinung.

Geben zu Frauenstein under meinem hiefur gestellten petschaft am mittihen nach dem heiligen pfingsttag anno zwayunddreyssigsten.

Revers: Landshaubt [man] General [mandat] praesentatum den 28 Maii anno im 32 mit insertion eines kgl. Generals [mandats] betreffend die widertauffer nit zu gedulden, darzu anhengig, die wolfdreier nit zu nemen, auch auf die neuen eynreisenden rosler anfacht zu haben.

The above mandate has the following postscript:

Nachdem die Romisch kgl. Mt. unser allergnedigster her in wenig verschinen jaren die muntz soldin, der einer drey pfenig gelten soll, und prag [coinage] eins wolfs haben, nicht zu nemen, verbotten hat, solches verbots wellet ermant sein und vorangezeigt soldin nit nemen, auch auf die ringschatzigen rossler, der yetz in kurtz vill in das landt pracht worden, vleissig achtung haben. Actum ut supra.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON LOSERTH'S STUDY ON CARINTHIA

Robert Friedmann

Since the preceding unusually interesting article by Loserth might not be fully appreciated without a few historical comments it seems appropriate to add some information concerning the origin of this paper and its contents. Dr. Johann Loserth (1846-1936), Professor of History at the University of Graz, Austria, himself a Catholic, but a warm friend of the Anabaptists and Mennonites, devoted almost all his lifework to the study of the Austrian Anabaptists (Hutterites). He became acquainted with them when he received the large literary estate of the outstanding scholar in Anabaptistica, Joseph Ritter von Beck.[1] The number of Loserth's publications in this field is immense, more than three hundred, thoroughly original and enlightening through and through. Thus one would have reason to assume that everything from his pen had been published when Loserth died in 1936 at the patriarchal age of ninety. It must therefore be considered a real surprise that eleven years after the author's death the MENNONITE QUARTERLY REVIEW should be able to publish such an original paper[2] for the first time, translated directly from the manuscript written in Loserth's characteristic handwriting (he never used a typewriter). We do not know much about the origin of this manuscript. It was found in the estate of the late John Horsch (1867-1941) and is at present in the collection of papers in Anabaptist history at Goshen College. It gives the impression that Loserth had originally planned it for an article in the *Archiv des Historischen Vereins für Kärnten,* in which journal, in 1867, Beck had published his first and only study on this subject. It almost appears that Loserth's paper was intended to be nothing but a supplement to Beck's treatment. Loserth must have written it between 1910 and 1913. Soon afterward, in 1914, he received from the Hutterian Brethren in

[1] Loserth received this *Nachlass* (many huge boxes with documentary material, partly original and partly copies) after Beck's death in 1888. Loserth's first publications appeared in 1893. Today this *Nachlass* is in the State Archives in Brno (Brünn), Moravia. Biographical material about Loserth may be found in the very good article "Loserth" in the *Menn. Lex.*, II, 692 ff, by Anton Kern, and in Chr. Hege's obituary in the *Menn. Geschichts Blätter,* I, 1936, 36-40. I myself visited Loserth twice, in 1928 and 1929 (he was at that time eighty-four years of age but in splendid spirit).

[2] Neither the article "Kärnten" (Loserth) nor that on "Matschidl" (Neff) in the *Menn. Lex.* mentions the present study. In the last years of his life Loserth sent me almost all his published papers and also some unpublished notes. No reference to the present study can be found in any of these materials.

South Dakota (Elias Walter) the newly published *Liederbuch der Hutterischen Brüder,* and accordingly corrected his manuscript and added some new quotations and references. The fact that in footnote 1 reference is made to A. H. Newman's *History of Antipedobaptism,* indicates that Loserth had changed his plans and now wanted his paper to be published in the United States instead of in Austria. John Horsch must have received the manuscript about 1920. For some reason it was never published. The MENNONITE QUARTERLY REVIEW did not begin publication until 1927 (at which time Horsch might have lost sight of this paper), and for a non-Mennonite journal the paper was too specialized. That it had arrived in America before 1923 can be inferred from the fact that Rudolf Wolkan's publication of the great *Geschicht-Buch der Hutterischen Brüder* (1923) was not used; new and to Loserth at that time unknown material was thereby omitted.

The article stresses that the Anabaptist movement in Carinthia was not too strong; only two brethren (Erfordter and Madschidl) attained a certain significance. It is good, however, to keep in mind that later on Carinthia amply made good what it had lacked in alertness during the Age of Reformation. For it was Carinthians who revived the Hutterite brotherhood in the eighteenth century, at that time almost at the brink of dying out. Loserth described these facts in great and loving detail in his study, "Decline and Revival of the Hutterites," in the MENNONITE QUARTERLY REVIEW, IV (April, 1930), 93-112. It is the epic of the erstwhile Lutheran Carinthian transmigrants to Transylvania who turned Hutterites.

The contents of the present study deserve a few remarks in addition to the factual notes which the translator has added and which should explain some of the conditions in Catholic Austria of the sixteenth century which seem rather strange to the American reader of today. In the center of Anabaptism in Carinthia in the first half of the sixteenth century stands the extraordinary figure of Antoni Erfordter whose epistle of 1538, the *"Urlaubsbrief,"* was published in full by Beck as early as 1867, and in digest by Lydia Müller in 1938. It represents a real mirror of the spiritual bewilderment of an earnest Christian of those times. Catholicism prior to the Council of Trent was at its lowest ebb and aroused disgust and opposition rather than confidence and attraction. Erfordter must have been an open-minded man with some education (occasionally he uses Latin words). It may be that he was a clerk of the city of Klagenfurt, or a teacher, or something in that

line. He had a home of his own and was happily married. I would call him a man of the lower middle-class. His agony must have been tremendous since he decided to leave wife and children behind him and go to Moravia at any price. As he writes, "At a place where there is no Gospel and no fear of God, no faith and no love, no one can ever become godly, let alone be saved." From this background one must understand all his gross expressions and invectives. He was surely a deeply emotional man, as we may recognize also from his marvelous hymns. That explains his decision to take a step which he apparently could share with no one in his home and with none of his friends. Somehow he had heard of the Hutterites and recognized their way as exactly the one he had been looking for all the time. His autobiographical hymn, *"Ich armes Brüderlein,"* is quite unusual for an Anabaptist because of its strong personal, almost individualistic tone, whereas most of the brethren entirely disregarded in their writings their private worries and sufferings. In the later writings of Erfordter the aggressive tone of his *"Urlaubsbrief"* had completely vanished—he had found peace of heart.

The writings of the other important Carinthian brother, Michael Matschidl, are also of unusual value and would deserve publication. I have discussed them, at least in part, in my study of the epistles of the Hutterian Brethren.[3]

The Loserth paper ends rather abruptly and without concluding the ideas suggested. In fact, Loserth sees the entire Anabaptist movement in a greater historical setting; namely, as an outgrowth and at the same time a victim of the struggle between Reformation and Counter-Reformation (as Ranke had called the Catholic Reformation) in the Habsburg domain of Austria. He emphasizes the role of Lutheran nobles before and after the Peace of Augsburg (1555) and highlights the changes of the general situation under the impact of the resolutions of the great Council of Trent and the coming of the Jesuits. He has written extensively on this subject.[4] To the modern historian of Anabaptism this particular angle seems to be of a somewhat lesser relevance for an appreciation of Anabaptism and its rise and later decline than the strictly spiritual issues. Nevertheless, the present study

[3] Robert Friedmann, "The Epistles of the Hutterian Brethren, a Study in Anabaptist Literature," *Menn. Quart. Rev.*, XX, July, 1946, 146-177.

[4] Cf. Georg Lösche, *Geschichte des Protestantismus im vormaligen und im neuen Oesterreich und in den Ländern der ehemaligen Oesterreichisch,* Wien, 1930. Lösche quotes Loserth at many places. This is the most comprehensive treatment of Austrian Protestantism.

is unusually stimulating for a reconsideration of the historical forces in process and presents a splendid picture of the religious background out of which Anabaptism grew, as well as of the mood of earnest Christians of that age who were craving after a new (and yet so old) avenue to a life of discipleship and of loyalty to the things which matter most.

THE MENNONITE COMMUNITY AT FAIRVIEW, MICHIGAN

J. Howard Kauffman

The community at Fairview, Michigan, offers an interesting study of Mennonite economic, social, and religious life for several reasons: (1) It is a compact social unit, entirely isolated from any other Mennonite community. (2) The majority of the inhabitants of the community are Mennonite. (3) Nature has endowed it with only the minimum requirements needed to support an agricultural economy, yet it has developed into a fairly prosperous community. (4) Its history is short, compared with most Mennonite communities. (5) The Mennonite congregation has grown, despite hardships and discouragements, until it is the largest in the Indiana-Michigan conference district.

Due to the lack of much desirable information, this paper will present only a general survey of the history and development of this particular community. The frame of reference is built around the theme of "The Importance of an Economic Base for the Mennonite Community." Consequently more emphasis will be given to the economic development of the community than to the record of the religious events and activities which took place. An attempt is made to compare this community with other Mennonite communities in Michigan, most of which have not attained economic stability. Although our information on these communities is meager, certain observations can safely be made, which throw light on the factors which have made for the success of the Fairview community. It is safe to say that some of these factors, if applied to other Mennonite communities throughout the land, would definitely work for their strengthening.

LOCATION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FAIRVIEW COMMUNITY

The village of Fairview is located in Oscoda County, Michigan, about two hundred miles north of Detroit. Oscoda County lies twenty-four miles square, near the center of what is known as the lower peninsula, that portion of Michigan lying between Lake Michigan and Lake Huron. This region is one of the most undeveloped parts of Michigan. Over three fourths of Oscoda County itself lies within the Au Sable State Forest and the Huron National Forest.

The topography of the region varies from level in some parts to strongly rolling in other parts. The soil is extremely sandy,

and population is supported only in those parts of the county where sufficient clay loam is found with the sand to support agriculture. The forest expanses are covered with scrub pines and other softwoods, the remains of a logging era. Sufficient grass grows to afford pasture for cattle which rove in the wooded areas near farming districts.

The Au Sable River flows eastward to Lake Huron through the center of the county. At Mio, the county seat, a power dam backs up the waters of the Au Sable for a distance of several miles, forming a sizable reservoir. Fish abound in the streams, and abundant wild life fills the wooded areas. Oscoda County is a mecca for deer hunters. In fact, the deer are so abundant as to be detrimental to the crops on the farms near the edge of the forested area.

The climate is rather severe, as would be expected of northern Michigan. The winters are characterized by much snow and severe cold. The growing season is short, and occasionally dry in late summer, two factors which add substantial difficulties to agriculture.

Soon after the Civil War, settlers began to come to northern Michigan in the interests of the lumber business. The abundance of white pine trees attracted logging companies, who purchased vast areas of land from the government and proceeded to clear out the valuable timber. The 1880's were "boom town" days for northern Michigan.[1] Lumbering towns sprang up like mushrooms. However, the same thing happened which happens with most communities whose income is derived from an exhaustible natural resource. As soon as the base of the economy is gone, the whole socio-economic structure topples, unless a new economic base can be found. A striking example of this is found in Oscoda County, about ten miles southeast of Fairview at a point on the Au Sable River. A lumbering town, by name of McKinley, once thrived at this point, boasting eight saloons and no churches.[2] In the early days of the Fairview Mennonite community E. A. Bontrager conducted mission Sunday-school work in this town. The town has long since died out completely, and has become a mere ghost of former days.

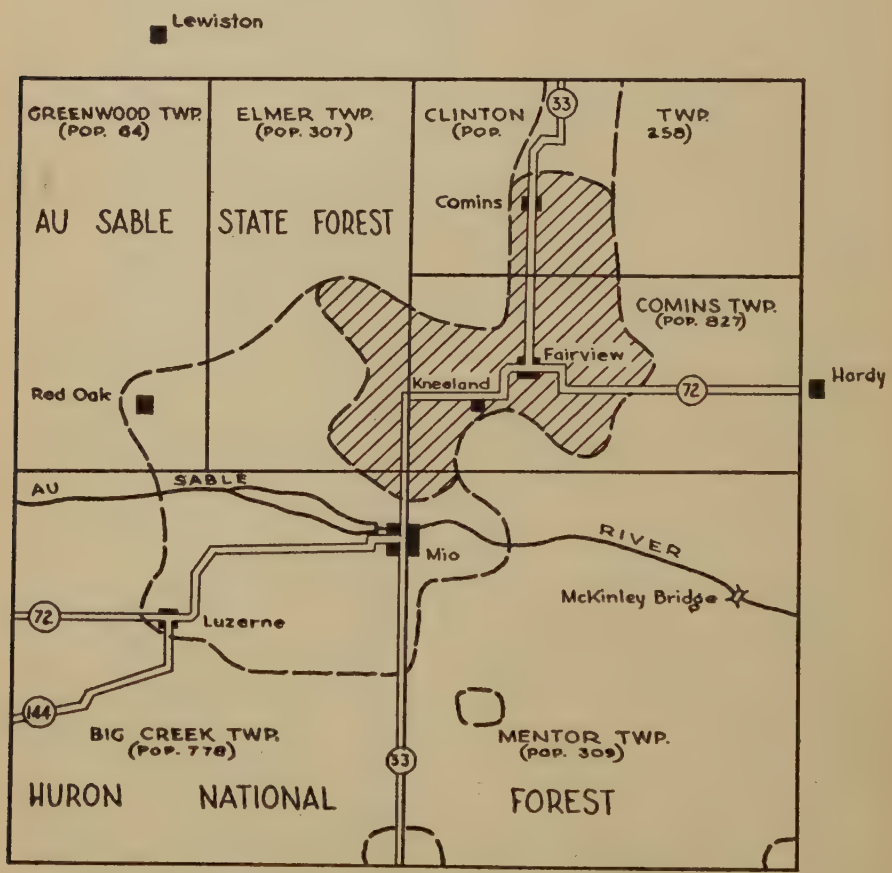
By the early 1890's most of the white pines had been removed. However, the lumber industry continued for some years, devoting more attention to the hardwoods which grew on the heavier soil

1 D. L. Gibson, *Socio-Economic Evolution in a Timbered Area in Northern Michigan*, p. 6.

2 According to Lilly Esch, *History of the Fairview Congregation*. This same source states the population of McKinley to have been 3,000 at one time, although this figure would seem to be too high.

of the country. By the turn of the century the lumber industry was on its last legs, and lumber companies were anxious to get rid of their land at any price they could command. This period marks a rapid turnover in the population of Oscoda County. A lumbering society was giving way to an agricultural society.

Some lumbering regions command other natural resources besides the trees. But not so with Oscoda County. All that was left when the lumber was gone was the soil, and only about one eighth of that was tillable. Consequently, even an agricultural economy looked quite insecure. It was at this juncture that Mennonites began to arrive on the scene. Before turning to them, however, we will take a glance at the county today.



MAP OF OSCODA COUNTY, MICHIGAN
Township populations in figures

The sketch of Oscoda County reproduced above shows the location of the villages and populated areas. The area inclosed

in broken lines denotes the populated area, although scattered dwellings may be found in other parts of the county. The shaded area denotes the area where Mennonites are found. For the purpose of this paper the latter area is the Fairview community. The community extends roughly ten miles in length and from two to four miles in width. The bounds of the populated districts of the county follow quite regularly the bounds of the tillable soil. The best farming land is found to the north and west of Fairview in a reversed "L" shape. By merely traveling across the country by car, one can observe that the best farming land falls with the Fairview community.

Oscoda County has no incorporated towns. Mio, the largest, has a population of 500. Fairview has about 150 persons. Comins and Luzerne are about half the size of Fairview. Only two cities of any size lie within 100 miles of Fairview. Alpena, population of 13,000, is 55 miles northeast of Fairview. Occasional shopping trips are made to Alpena for clothing and less staple commodities. Bay City, population of 48,000, lies ninety-five miles south of Fairview. The great distance from population centers creates a great handicap in the marketing of agricultural commodities. This is further aggravated by the fact that no railroad passes through Oscoda County. In recent years the tourist trade has increased the local markets, and is no doubt in part responsible for a recent upshoot in total population. Nevertheless, it remains that Oscoda County, with its present population of 2,543 (or 4.5 persons per square mile), is the most sparsely populated county in all the state of Michigan.[3] The average 1940 population density for the United States was 44.2 persons per square mile. For the state of Michigan it was 92.2 per square mile.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE FAIRVIEW COMMUNITY

By 1900 the lumber resources were largely used up. Lumber companies began to advertise their land, in hopes of obtaining some returns on their original investment. The Loud Lumber Company, holders of large areas in Oscoda County, printed attractive posters and pamphlets and distributed them throughout lower Michigan, Ontario, Indiana, Ohio, and other states, in the hope of attracting prospective farmers. The literature showed pictures of luxurious fields of clover growing in Oscoda County, and emphasized the value of the crop in the light of the prevailing high market price of clover seed. A historical sketch of the Fairview

[3] *Sixteenth Census of the United States*, Vol. I, "Population." 1940, p. 504.

congregation in the *Minutes of the Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference, 1864-1929* gives the following information:

> . . . many men responded to the literature which was sent out . . . to arouse interest in this section. Some men who came liked it well enough to buy a tract of land and bring their families here to their new homes while others did not. The company (Loud Lumber Co.) provided the land seekers with a wagon, team, and guide to help them see as much of this district as possible while here. For several years this wagon with its occupants could be seen daily going from the railroad station at Comins toward Fairview. . . ."[4]

Among these prospectors were a number of Mennonites. The first men to bring their families to Oscoda County were Noah Yoder, Ira N. Yoder, Levi Kauffman, Jeff Miller, and John Stutzman. These families arrived on April 3, 1901,[5] from Howard County, Indiana. Other Mennonite families followed, including a few Amish families. Since the southern half of the county contained the older population, the Mennonites took up the new land around Fairview. Most of the land was purchased at from four to five dollars per acre. The low price was a big attraction to the settlers. For the most part they were people with insufficient capital to buy the land in their former communities which sold at a much higher price. The prospect of purchasing farms and paying for them in a few years with three-bushels-per-acre yields of clover seed was attractive, to say the least.

The rapid influx of settlers is related by Lilly Esch as follows:

> From 1901 to 1912 people moved in very rapidly, due partially to the untiring efforts of the Loud Lumber Company. . . . In fact, people came in so fast for a while that those already settled were hard pressed to find sufficient food for themselves and the new settlers until the latter could become established in homes of their own.
>
> These early settlers were real pioneers, for there was but little cleared land from which to obtain a living. Many of them had large and growing families and none of them had much capital to begin with. . . . Added to this were the small, ramshackle houses in which they must live until they could build better ones. Many of these houses were the shacks left by the lumbermen. . . .[6]

Other difficulties were found in the poor roads (impassable at times) and the poor markets for cash products. Consequently it is no wonder that a goodly number of the settlers stayed in Oscoda County for only a short while.

[4] *Minutes of the Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference, 1864-1929,* Mennonite Publishing House, p. 310.

[5] Lilly Esch, *History of the Fairview Congregation* gives this date. The *Minutes* . . . state that the first Mennonites settled near Fairview in 1900. The reason for this discrepancy is not apparent.

[6] Lilly Esch, *op. cit.*

Aside from these difficulties things went comparatively well for the first few years, but in 1906 a severe drought caused the loss of two clover crops—the crop to be harvested and the crop seeded for the next year. Coupled with the drought, a weevil got into the clover and played additional havoc.[7] Thus the farmers were left without their main cash crop. Nor could they turn to other crops, such as corn and smaller grains. They had already found out that one or two years of these heavier crops depleted the soil to a state of submarginal fertility.

For five or six years the farmers struggled along attempting to find some suitable crop which would support the community. It was a dark period and many became discouraged and moved away. It appeared that the community was on the verge of breaking up entirely. Those who remained can be divided into two groups: (1) those who were so poor they could not move away, and (2) those who were determined to develop the Fairview district so that it could support a church community.

About this time a decision was made that had a rather important effect on the further development of the community. For several years an active program of Sunday-school mission work was being carried on at several outlying posts from five to twenty miles from Fairview. This work was carried on under the leadership of the minister, E. A. Bontrager, and Bishop Menno Esch. Travel difficulties, however, made it impossible to carry on this work without keeping the ministers away from their own community frequently as many as three days a week. Thus their work at home was neglected. It became apparent to the congregation that unless the pastor gave more time to encouraging the people at home, both the congregation and the mission outposts would be lost. Consequently Menno Esch, with the congregation, decided to discontinue certain parts of the mission work so that he could devote more energy to the task at home. The congregation needed not only encouragement from the pulpit but also some practical leadership in solving its agricultural problems. This their bishop was able to give. Subsequent developments strongly indicate that a wise decision had been made, and that it had a positive effect in helping the community to get back on its feet financially. Mission work was by no means given up, for the ministers, especially E. A. Bontrager, continued to serve the needs at outlying posts. However, the fact that the problem was realized and faced, and the decision made, is significant in itself.

[7] Much of this and succeeding information was gained from a personal interview with Menno Esch in October, 1946.

Not having found a suitable cash crop, the farmers began looking to livestock as a possible solution to their difficulties. To obtain livestock, however, required much more capital than the farmers could command. It was practically impossible to borrow money because of its inavailability and the exorbitant rates of interest, often ranging as high as twenty-five per cent. In addition, the loan companies would not accept chattel security. Even the little capital which a few farmers did possess was often used to help those in worse straits.

By 1912 some of the farmers were beginning to acquire a few sheep. Sheep fared well on the pastures, but were detrimental to clover, cropping it too close to the ground, especially in dry years. The greatest problem was that of marketing the sheep. Obviously there was no home market; so the sheep had to be shipped long distances. The only transportation facility was the one-track narrow gauge lumberman's railroad that ran southeast from Comins to Oscoda, on Lake Huron. From there the livestock had to be reloaded to be shipped farther. Because of this handicap local livestock dealers took advantage of the Fairview farmers, and paid them low prices. Undaunted, the farmers decided to do their own shipping. A carload of sheep was sent to Buffalo and a return of a cent a pound above the dealer's price was realized. Thereafter the dealers were more ready to pay fair prices.

Not all the factors that went into the making of life in the community during these early years were disadvantageous. Several things can be mentioned which favor Fairview as over and against more prosperous communities. Certainly one of these was the low level of fixed costs. Taxes were very low. Interest on investment in land was negligible. Building costs also were low due to the presence of abundant supplies of lumber. Another factor is the relative freedom of the community from vegetative diseases. The few orchards that were in production bore bountifully and tree diseases and parasites of older communities were lacking. There was plentiful pasture on the uncleared lands. Wild game provided a constant source of meat. The woods abounded in huckleberries, June berries, raspberries, blackberries, and wild strawberries. In spite of its rigors, the climate was healthful. The freedom and independence achieved through land ownership gave the farmers a feeling of "room to breathe."[8]

These favorable factors, together with the increase in livestock enterprises and the rise of agricultural prices during the war

[8] Lilly Esch, *op. cit.*

years, gave new life to the community. By 1916 and 1917 some of the farmers had accumulated enough savings to buy a few cows. In a few years dairy products were providing the long-sought cash item. By 1925 Menno Esch had developed a sizable herd of high-grade cows. Subsequent years show a general increase in the reliance of the community upon the dairy industry. To process the milk produced, a creamery and condensery was built in the early 1920's. The coming of the truck greatly facilitated the transportation of dairy products, and livestock as well.

An important factor in the successful development of an agricultural economy was the interest of the farmers in government aid to agriculture. Their continual and determined search for adequate crop and livestock enterprises led the farmers to seek aid from the Michigan State Agricultural College and the state offices of the Department of Agricultural Extension Service, in Lansing. Crop and livestock specialists were obtained as speakers for Farmers' Institutes and special meetings. The farmers of the community eagerly attended these meetings and received many new ideas and inspirations. Specialists were consulted to help analyze the soil, to recommend crop raising procedures, and to give the latest information on the development of proper dairy feed formulas. The Department of Agriculture rendered valuable aid in the search for and development of a hardy strain of alfalfa which would stand the rigors of a northern Michigan climate. The development of this forage crop has been a boon to the dairy industry. The County Agricultural Agent has been a constant source of aid to Fairview farmers.

Brief mention may be made of two other agencies which have been of benefit to the farmers. Since the early days of the settlement it has been important to obtain maximum prices for clover seed. Especially was that true during the price decline which set in a few years after the settlement started. This problem has been adequately handled by affiliation with the Alcona County Seed Growers Marketing Association. Alcona County is directly to the east of Oscoda County.

The other agency is the Department of Agriculture Dairy Herd Improvement Association. Dairy-herd testing has been carried on for over twenty years by many of the farmers who are alert to realize the importance of culling out all "boarders." On occasions, a D.H.I.A. milk tester has been located in the county, making his monthly rounds to the farms of co-operators. Most of the testing, however, is done by the farmers themselves, thus saving the expense of hiring the professional tester.

The county agricultural agent has stood the farmers in good stead on many occasions. In recent years he was influential in obtaining farm deferments for a number of the young men of draft age. All in all, it is evident that the free services of the Department of Agriculture and other agricultural agencies have been an important factor in the economic success of the community.

THE RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES OF THE CONGREGATION

The tendency for Mennonite peoples to band together in closely knit social units has been carried through four hundred years of persecution and social ostracism of varying degrees. When Mennonites migrate to new communities they tend to go in groups, and where a group locates a new congregation invariably results. Thus it was only a matter of course that formal organization of the Fairview Mennonite congregation should take place.

As was earlier stated, the first settlers arrived in 1901. For the first year no Mennonite services were held. A group of Methodists held church services regularly in the Gusler schoolhouse, near Fairview, but had no Sunday school. In the fall of 1902, E. A. Troyer (who had come to Fairview a year earlier) began teaching in the Gusler school, and during this time interest was aroused in starting a Sunday school. A Baptist minister of Alpena, named White, helped them to organize a union Sunday school in the spring of 1903, with E. A. Troyer as superintendent. When E. A. Bontrager arrived from Nappanee, Indiana, with his family in October, 1903, it was decided to hold preaching services following Sunday school each Sunday. When the new year came (1904) Sunday school was reorganized and was now called Mennonite instead of Union. In January, 1904, D. J. Johns, bishop from Goshen, Indiana, held revival meetings at Fairview, and following this on February 2 the church was organized with D. J. Johns as presiding bishop until 1909. E. A. Bontrager, however, was given authority to perform the routine duties of bishop. The church roll consisted of thirty-five charter members.[9] In June, 1904, the congregation was formally taken into the Indiana-Michigan Amish Mennonite Conference.[10] During the spring of 1904 the first meeting house was built. Help in financing the building was received from the churches in other states.

The congregation grew rapidly the next six years. Although some members were gained from non-Mennonite families living near by, the increase was chiefly due to Mennonites moving into

[9] *Minutes*, p. 309.
[10] *Ibid.* p. 188.

the community. Many families stayed only a few months. The influx, however, continued to exceed the outflow, so that by January 1, 1910, there were 214 members in the congregation. The rapid increase in the size of the congregation called for reinforcement of the ministry. E. A. Bontrager was without doubt a great vitalizing force in the early days of the congregation. Not only was he concerned with the home congregation, but he gave much time to the work in outlying districts. This, of course, created a need for additional ministers at home. In December, 1903, Isaac Miller, a minister from Chesterville, Illinois, moved to Fairview for his health, but passed away in April, 1904. Soon afterward Nathaniel Troyer, a minister from Howard County, Indiana, moved to Fairview, but stayed only a few months. On December 3, 1906, Menno Esch was ordained minister by Bishop Johns. In 1907, N. Z. Yoder, a minister from Tennessee, moved into the community and served as minister until he died in 1918. In 1908, Menno Steiner was ordained the first deacon of the congregation.

By 1909 the congregation had swelled to over two hundred and the church building had been enlarged. A resident bishop was needed. Consequently Menno Esch was ordained bishop in that year, and has held that important post to the present, a period of thirty-eight years. At the same time L. A. Kauffman was ordained to the ministry, and served until 1912 when he moved to North Dakota. In 1912 and again in 1947 the congregation was host to the Indiana-Michigan district church conference. In 1939 it entertained the annual meeting of the Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities.

In 1913 a maximum membership of 226 was recorded, a number not reached again until 1926. The year 1913 marked the point in the early migration when those moving out of the community exceeded the number moving in. In spite of members received by baptism a gradual decline in total church membership set in. It is significant that Lilly Esch records the moving away of several families in order to obtain work. Apparently the economic situation had tightened with such a large influx of population. There were also losses to the church because of unfaithful members who left. In 1916, E. A. Bontrager moved to Midland, Michigan, to assume pastoral charge of the small congregation there. In April, 1918, the church building was destroyed by fire, a keen loss to the community. Work on a new building was begun immediately, although the problem of financing a new building was difficult. Added to that was the difficulty in obtaining building materials

due to wartime shortages. Nevertheless the new building was completed and dedicated in 1919.

In 1920, Moses Steiner was ordained to the ministry to help Menno Esch who had been serving alone for two years. A change of deacons took place upon the death of Menno Steiner in 1931. Otis Bontrager was ordained in his place the following year. In 1946, Harvey Handrich was ordained minister. Thus the present ministry consists of Menno Esch, Moses Steiner, Harvey Handrich, and Otis Bontrager. The 1946 church membership was 356. E. A. Bontrager returned to Fairview in 1944, but is retired from active ministry.

Brief mention has been made of the mission work carried on in surrounding communities. The early church at Fairview was by no means self-contained. It seems that when they most needed help themselves, they were most active in helping those round about them. There was little evidence of social stratification in the county in the early days. All were living on the same subsistence level, desperately trying to wrest a livelihood from the meager resources at hand. That which was the problem of one was the concern of all. Neither was there any line drawn because of church affiliation or nonaffiliation. Non-Mennonites in the community received the same aid that was given to the Mennonite brethren. Moreover, the concerns went deeper than mere material aid. The unchurched areas all about were in need of the Gospel. The lumberjacks were a rough and rugged lot, but they appreciated the messages and songs brought them by the Mennonites. As early as 1904 E. A. Bontrager was holding services at McKinley and other lumber camps.

The lumber companies were continually drawing people to land in various parts of Oscoda, and surrounding counties. Consequently not all the Mennonites attracted to the region settled near Fairview. Lilly Esch relates that "while the church was growing and people were moving into the Fairview community Mennonites were also making many settlements within a radius of twenty-five miles. They settled in such small groups that none of them had a resident minister. Consequently their calls for an occasional sermon and church service were directed toward Fairview. Nor did they call altogether in vain, for E. A. Bontrager spent a great deal of time preaching in these out-of-the-way places, especially after sufficient ministerial help was secured at the home base."[11] Such places as Elmira, Red Oak, Kittle Schoolhouse, Pen-

[11] Lilly Esch, *op. cit.*

quite School, Cloverdale, Hardy, Comins, Sunnyside, and Lewiston were at one time or another scenes of mission Sunday-school work. Oftentimes visits to these outposts were made only once or twice a month, and frequently in the wintertime visits were suspended altogether due to impassable roads. The tenacity with which these people clung to their destitute farms is nothing short of amazing. Lewiston, twenty-two miles northwest of Fairview, may be cited as an example:

> In 1909 a great effort was made to entice Mennonites into this community. Land was offered for four dollars per acre. . . . The town had once been prosperous as a lumbering center but as soon as that industry was run out there was a general decline. Real estate became cheap, there was a slump in business, and finally a large part of the town was burned by forest fires. Practically the only paying crop from the soil was potatoes, and with the distance to market and the uncertainty of a crop on account of early frosts, as well as the uncertainty of prices, it was a constant struggle. However, some of the people stayed there for quite a few years. . . .[12]

The efforts at this place were not all in vain. A number of conversions were made among non-Mennonites, and we find the names of Tracy and Maxwell as officers in the Sunday school. Some of the converts joined other churches. The community continued to disintegrate, however, despite efforts to stem the tide on the part of the loyal residents who continued to plead for a minister. The work was abandoned in 1921 and the few remaining members transferred to Fairview. Such was also the fate of other outposts, although many did not exist for as long a period as did Lewiston.

The fact that the Fairview congregation was composed of people who had come from many different communities no doubt had its advantages. Many who came were young people. The fact that they had left their old homes is evidence of a spirit of adventure and desire for new existence. They brought with them many ideas for formal and informal religious and social activities. Consequently we find activities springing up which duplicated those participated in in the communities from whence they came. Singing classes were held as early as 1903 with E. A. Troyer as director. In 1904 Sunday evening young people's meetings were started, and have been continued through the years. A girls' sewing circle was organized in 1912. Later the older women were included and in time became the leaders in the circle. The circle performed a social function for the women of the community as

12 *Ibid.*

well as rendering much aid to needs outside and inside the community. When a house burned, the sewing circle came to the rescue and helped provide new clothing and bedding. Needy homes (both Mennonite and non-Mennonite) were recipients also of clothing and bedding. Much clothing was sent to the Ft. Wayne, Detroit, and Chicago city missions. Sewing for war sufferers and Russian relief was done after World War I. In 1918 the circle helped other ladies in the county sew for the Red Cross. Financial support was also given to various mission causes, including India medical work.

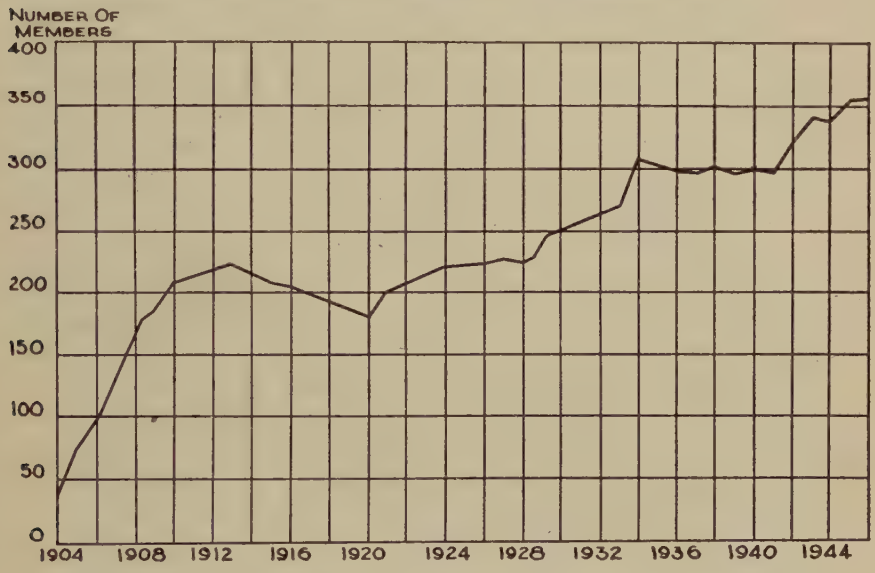
A Sunday-school library was started in 1915. In 1917 the children's Quarter Fund Investments program began. A young people's literary society was formed in 1920. The latter did not succeed very well. It was largely a social affair, and proper leadership apparently was lacking. To take its place the "Standard Bearers" Society was formed in 1927 and has received better support. The projects of the society include many of a religious nature, such as singing for shut-ins and giving Christmas gifts to poor folks in the community.

In July, 1923, and again in 1924, Nellie Bechtelheimer, a singing teacher of the Church of the Brethren, conducted a series of singing classes. This helped improve the quality of singing in the congregation. The Indiana-Michigan Sunday School Conference met at Fairview in August, 1927. Non-Mennonites of the community are always welcomed to the church services and many attend, especially for special services and revival meetings. No other churches are located near Fairview.

No one person can be given all the credit for the development of the Fairview community. Various people have been mentioned as leaders in the church activities. A number of hardworking laymen gave leadership and strength to the Sunday school, the mission work, and the various young people's activities. It is reasonably certain that Menno Esch, however, had much to do with the success of the community. He was a leader not only in the pulpit but also in the field. It was he who gave encouragement in the dark days. He and a few others undersigned the notes of those in debt. He was a leader in developing new crops and in introducing livestock. He was even somewhat of an inventor. For twenty years Menno Esch and his sons have been using a homemade barn cleaning apparatus which serves as a litter carrier. This bit of inventive ingenuity was recently described in the magazine, "Electricity on the Farm."[18]

[18] Richard L. Witz, "Clothesline and Walking Plow Used for Barn Cleaners," *Electricity on the Farm,* December, 1945, p. 8.

The long period of Esch's leadership has contributed to the stability of the congregation. There have been no major church troubles during this period. The only rift which occurred came in 1925 when a few members withdrew to form a more liberal congregation which affiliated with the Central Conference of Mennonites. This group, now numbering about one hundred, has its church located in Comins, five miles from Fairview. A number of residents of the community, seeking a church with less strict discipline than the Fairview Mennonite Church, have joined the Comins Church and have become active in that group.



MEMBERSHIP GROWTH OF THE FAIRVIEW CONGREGATION, 1904 to 1946

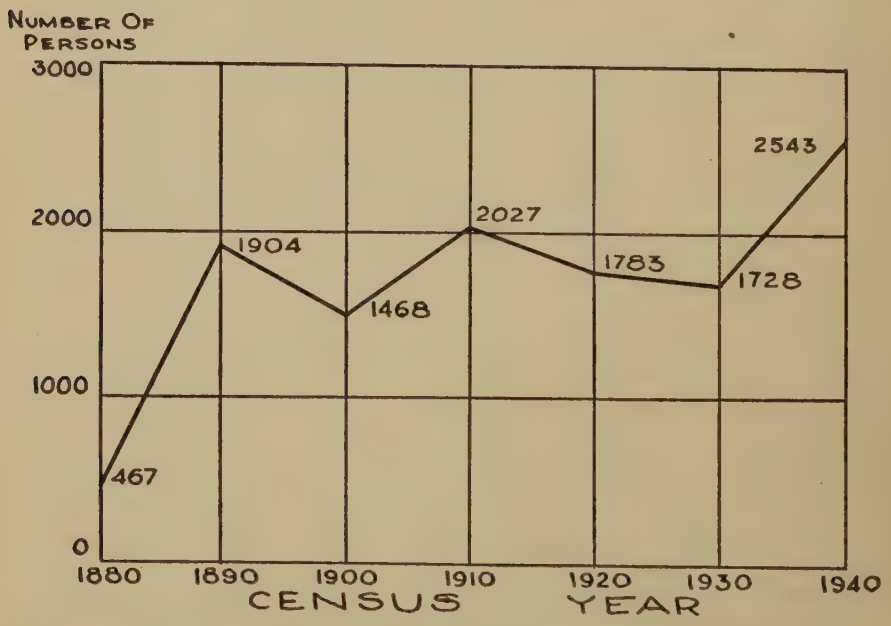
Source: *Mennonite Yearbook and Directory,* annual issues, 1905-47

The chart reproduced on this page presents graphically the growth in membership of the Fairview congregation. Because of children and adult nonmembers, the actual number of persons in the community associated with the congregation would be somewhat higher. In 1946, when the membership was 356, the number on the Sunday-school roll was over 400.

The membership trends, however, are interesting. The increase from 35 members to 214 in a period of six years (1904-1910) is nothing less than remarkable. This was no doubt largely due to the advertising of the lumber companies. The settlers no doubt also encouraged friends and relatives to come to Fairview. The most difficult period from the economic standpoint was from 1908

to 1912. The decrease in membership, however, did not set in until after 1913, a lag of several years. This lag is probably due to several reasons: (1) The lumber companies ceased advertising about this time. (2) The better farm land was already taken up. (3) Reports of unfavorable circumstances were drifting back to the communities from whence the people were coming. The general decrease from 1913 to 1920 is due to the surplus of emigration over immigration. By 1920 most of those who were dissatisfied had left, and wartime prosperity was enabling the Fairview farmers to get on their feet financially. The general increase from 1920 to the present reflects the normal trend of a community which has become stabilized, no longer subject to the unbalancing migrations in and out.

Some interesting correlations can be made between the church membership trends and the population trends for Oscoda County. The chart below shows the population of Oscoda County in the census years 1880 to 1940. Besides the general trend, three distinct cyclical movements are evident: (1) The lumber industry cycle from 1880 to 1900. (2) The agricultural cycle from 1900 to 1930. (3) A recent upshoot since 1930. The Mennonites, of course, did not figure in the first cycle, but were quite distinctly a



POPULATION OF OSCODA COUNTY, MICHIGAN, BY TEN YEAR PERIODS

Sources: *Sixteenth Census of the U.S.*, Vol. 1, "Population," 1940, p. 504. Also *Abstract of the Twelfth Census of the U.S., 1900*

part of the agricultural cycle. The period from 1920 to 1940, however, presents certain correlation problems, which our meager information throws little light upon. During the decade of the twenties, the general population decreased a little over three per cent while the church membership increased twenty-seven per cent. It may be that the Mennonites, having obtained the better land, were able to achieve a measure of economic security sooner than the other peoples in Oscoda County. There is also some evidence that the industrial prosperity of the 1920's was creating a strong rural to urban movement among the other peoples of the county. The Mennonites, tending to remain on the land, did not figure in this movement. It is fairly certain that the abrupt rise in population during the 1930's is due to the marked increase in tourist trade. A considerable number of recently established business enterprises are based on trade with tourists and game seekers. The numerous lakes in Oscoda County are being frequented more and more each summer, and dwellings have been constructed on their banks. The Oscoda County Chamber of Commerce is widely advertising the sporting accommodations of the county. With the general increase in the tourist business in the United States, and states such as Michigan in particular, it is entirely possible that future years may show that the present population increase is a part of a cycle based on a tourist economy.

THE COMMUNITY TODAY

Driving through the Fairview community on one of October's bright blue days, it is hard to conceive of the pioneer conditions which greeted the first settlers. The fields, though lacking evidence of high production, are orderly and attractive. The gently rolling pastures frequently exhibit a herd of cows. The farm buildings show improvements, but as yet do not evidence the size and substantiality of communities which have enjoyed a longer prosperity. The roads are greatly improved. Two state highways run through Fairview and Mio. Fairview is located at a crossroad. Near the intersection are clustered the various shops and dwelling houses which compose the village. On a knoll overlooking the intersection stands the spiritual and social hub of the community, the church building itself.

Mennonite-owned stores in Fairview include a drugstore, feed store, two garages, a grocery store, a locker plant, carpenter shop, and a general merchandise store. The creamery, a sawmill, and a cement manufacturing concern are also Mennonite-owned.

Businesses owned by non-Mennonites include a restaurant, a grocery, a blacksmith shop, two garages, and a barber shop. It is evident that these businesses are all derived from, or complement, the agricultural pursuits of the community.

The creamery, owned by Ernest Shantz, is by far the largest business of the community. This reflects the importance of milk as the main cash item for the farmer. A herd of cows is standard equipment on each farm. The market for whole milk is not large. Consequently the dairy products leave the community in condensed form, chiefly butter and dried skim milk. A look at the creamery records gives us an idea of the volume of milk production in the community. The table shows the purchases and principal sales of the creamery for a twelve-month period from August, 1945, to August, 1946:

PURCHASES AND PRINCIPAL SALES OF DAIRY PRODUCTS
Shantz Creamery, August, 1945, to August, 1946

Commodity	Amount	O.P.A. Price	Net Amount (approx.)
Purchases:			
Whole Milk	6,828,162 lb.	$2.77 (4%)	$189,000
Cream	57,900 lb. BF	.55	32,000
Total Purchases			221,000
Sales:			
Butter	318,359 lb.	.57	181,000
Dried Milk	429,595 lb.	.145	62,000
Bottled Milk	450,000 qts.		75,000
Total Sales			318,000

(Source: Personal Interview with Ernest Shantz, October, 1946)

It is significant to note that for the period since the removal of O.P.A. price controls, the price of raw dairy products has averaged approximately fifty per cent higher. This raises the present income to the farmers by a substantial amount above that shown in the table. A large amount of the butter is shipped to Detroit. General Foods Corporation purchases the dried milk. The bottled milk, and small amounts of sweet cream, are sold largely to tourists in the surrounding areas. In addition, substantial quantities of ice cream are made and sold by the creamery.

The farmers are ever alert to new enterprises which will increase their yearly incomes. The advent of hybrid seed corn was welcomed by Oscoda farmers. The open-pollinated varieties were soon replaced with hybrid strains which matured earlier, thus making a crop more certain to escape the early September frosts. Although the soil still will not support heavy farming, the farmers are able to raise enough corn and small grains (chiefly oats) to supplement the forage fed to the livestock. The only purchases made outside the community are small amounts of minerals and feed concentrates which are used with the grain supplements. Some hogs are raised, and a few beef cattle are being introduced. Very little poultry is raised.

Obtaining lime for fertilizing legume crops was a problem faced by the farmers. It was expensive to have lime fertilizer shipped into the county; so the farmers are making use of a valuable marl deposit on the bed of one of the near-by lakes. Marl is a rich sand or clay deposit containing lime. Two and one-half tons of the marl contain the lime content of a ton of agricultural lime. The Agricultural Adjustment Administration subsidizes the enterprise, so that the cost to the farmer is substantially reduced. The A.A.A. pays two thirds of the marl price plus transportation. The farmer pays one third plus a spreading charge. Under contract with the A.A.A., Reuben Esch hauls 2,500 tons annually onto the farms, at the rate of $1.35 per ton.

Perhaps the most outstanding of recent enterprises is the participation of Oscoda County farmers in the development of a new breed of dairy cattle in the United States.[14] In 1936 the United States Department of Agriculture imported twenty Red Dane cows and two bulls from Denmark. These have been under test at the U.S.D.A. Experiment Station at Beltsville, Maryland. Young bulls from this herd are being used on farms in three Michigan counties (Alcona, Oscoda, and Sanilac) to build up grade herds. Through their county agent the Fairview farmers are now privileged to use several of these bulls in the building up of their herds. In October, 1946, the three Michigan counties were the only counties in the United States where these bulls were available. Consistent breeding for production has built up this dual-purpose breed in Denmark to a point of high average production. Striking results have been obtained in this country where Red Dane bulls have been crossed with ordinary grade cows. Production records of four first cross Danish cows on the farm of Clifford Shantz

[14] Jim Roe, "Red Danes, A New Dairy Breed," *Successful Farming*, February, 1946, p. 23.

show an average annual production of sixty-eight pounds more butterfat from the daughters than from their grade dams. Third cross females may be registered with the American Red Danish Cattle Association, formed recently at East Lansing, Michigan. Production records must be kept on all Red Dane cattle, and on all pedigrees there must be a production record extending back three generations. Red Danes are not likely to set production records, but are consistent in maintaining high averages. The benefits of this new strain are being realized by the farmers at Fairview through consistently expanding milk checks.

What can Oscoda County expect in the coming years? Is there room for expansion? Can the community provide employment for its young people so that they will not leave? The Fairview people are quite optimistic. They are enjoying prosperity for the first time in the history of the community. They are satisfied with their community, for they are enjoying the fruits of their own labors. Because of the tourists, the market for agricultural products is expanding right at their doors. True, there is little tillable land left that can be taken up by young farmers. In some places near the edge of the farming area, new land can be obtained at low prices, but it is correspondingly poor. It is possible that with good soil conservation and fertilization methods some of this land will become productive. The better land now sells upward from $25.00 per acre, depending on the value of the developments on the land. Few of the farmers have debts on their land. They weathered the recent depression with flying colors. While mortgage holders were taking away 200-, 300-, and even 500-dollar-per-acre farms from farmers in Illinois and Iowa, the Fairview farmers were going scot-free. Their farms were not mortgaged in the first place, and the general antipathy to incurring any debts kept them from tying up their land by borrowing. In addition, the Fairview farmer, long used to living on what he produced himself, did not feel such a keen loss from the low level of agricultural prices. The result was as Menno Esch stated, "We barely knew there was a depression."[15] As long as the farmers of the community continue to hold such a high equity in their land and follow their sound business practices of the past, it would seem safe to say that their economic security is assured for many years to come.

As was previously stated, the Mennonite Church is the only church within five miles of Fairview. The liberal Mennonite group is located at Comins. Three churches are located in Mio: the Methodist, the Catholic, and the Seventh-Day Adventist. Of

[15] Menno Esch interview, October, 1946.

these the latter is the most recent, and has grown constantly, due to its strong mission emphasis. A Church of God is located about seven miles west of Fairview, and a Baptist Church is at Curran, fifteen miles east. Thus it is evident that the Fairview Church must meet the spiritual needs of the community. It can be said that the church has been more active in reaching the needs of the unchurched about them than have many Mennonite churches in other communities. Their common struggles for a livelihood have no doubt had much to do with this. In recent years, however, the church has not carried on much mission work. Bishop Menno Esch regrets this circumstance, and feels that it may in part be due to the achievement of economic self-sufficiency. The community in and around Fairview is about sixty per cent Mennonite. Thus it is to be expected that community affairs, such as there are, are strongly influenced by Mennonite opinion. The county school superintendent lives in Fairview and is a Mennonite of the Comins group. The school system itself has employed a number of Mennonite teachers in the past. The present consolidated school draws elementary students from around Fairview, and high-school students from the Comins and Curran districts in addition. Over one hundred students are usually enrolled in the high school. The building was constructed in three installments, 1925, 1934-35, and 1944.

It would only be fair to add that the church has had a moral influence on the community. The absence of theaters, saloons, or questionable places of amusements is no doubt in part attributable to the influence of the church. During the recent war practically no trouble was incurred because of Mennonites going to camps for conscientious objectors. This would suggest that the church commands a measure of respect from the non-Mennonites, despite its peculiar doctrines. The county newspaper, published at Mio, gives the Mennonites considerable recognition, and in the past has printed a record of many of the church's activities.

Despite financial handicaps, the Fairview congregation has consistently contributed to the wider program of the church. Returned missionaries visiting Fairview always inspired the people to contribute to foreign missions. The work of the sewing circle in supporting missions has been mentioned. Contributions from the congregation were sent for the Mennonite hospital at La Junta. The Civilian Public Service program was faithfully supported. During the twelve-month period ending March 31, 1946, a total of nearly $5,000.00 was given to C.P.S., missions, and relief.[16]

[16] Letter from E. C. Bender, Treasurer, Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities.

The congregational leadership has in the past not been very favorable towards the educational program of the Mennonite Church. This may be in part because of a fear that young people leaving the community to go to school may not return, and also that the young people might imbibe more liberal patterns of dress and conduct from other less strict sections of the denomination. Fairview has not sent many people into mission work or other positions of leadership in the church. This is no doubt partly a result of the attitude toward education. At present, however, a number of the young people from Fairview are attending Goshen College.

Some valuable observations can be made by comparing the Fairview community with other Mennonite settlements in northern Michigan. The Maple River congregation near Brutus, Michigan, about eighty miles northwest of Fairview, was started in 1879. It nearly died out in 1919, and is still struggling along with a membership of seventy-eight. In the words of Menno Esch, "The land isn't any better at Fairview than at Brutus." Emmett County, in which Brutus is located, has an average density of 34.3 (as compared with Oscoda County's 4.5). Thus the markets should have been much better. Why the difference in outcome over the years? Some of the reasons are probably economic and some social. We do not have evidence of such a strong lumber company advertising campaign at Brutus as at Fairview. We do not have evidence of as strong a mission spirit as at Fairview. We do have evidence of considerable church factionalism. A Wisler group split off the main body in 1886.[17] The membership was always small after this. Following the ordination of a new minister in 1920, the work was revived. A number of people were received from the Wisler branch at that time, but in a few years a "reaction" set in. It seems that constant competition between the two factions was a disintegrating factor.

Other congregations in northern Michigan which have remained small are: (1) Pleasant View, Chief, Michigan, begun in 1903. It enjoyed a steady growth until 1911 when the pastor moved away; it nearly died out a few years later,[18] and now has a membership of thirty-one. (2) The Zion congregation near Vestaburg, Michigan, held its first services in 1913. After 1920 "a number of families moved away, others proved unfaithful, and the few left became discouraged, so that by 1926-27 the work was practically closed."[19] The present membership is thirty-eight. (3)

[17] *Minutes*, p. 323.
[18] *Minutes*, p. 329.
[19] *Ibid.*, p. 338.

The Union congregation near White Cloud, Michigan. The first settlers came in 1896 because of their occupation of pulling stumps. Others came later to obtain cheap land. Still others came because of family ties with those who had come before. "Perhaps the reason of their settling in this particular place was due to the influence of the Amish who had come here some years before. . . . At the time of the Mennonites' coming they numbered about forty."[20] By 1903 the congregation numbered ninety, the largest in its history. The present membership is sixty-one. Reasons given for the decline (down to twenty-five members by 1925) were the inability to make a living from the poor land; many lived considerable distances from the church; young people left to find work in other states; and in later years young people went to near-by cities to obtain work. "It is a most unfortunate factor, that there is no employment near at hand. Thus the church loses her members when they become old enough to go out and work."[21] Another significant factor is that there was little activity for the young people outside of church and Sunday-school services. Distance from the church was a factor in this also.

OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The above illustrations suggest the following reasons why these Michigan congregations remained small:

(1) Church factionalism.
(2) Original immigration was not large.
(3) Loss of the only resident pastor.
(4) Poor soil.
(5) Distance from church (members widely scattered).
(6) Lack of work in the community for the young people.
(7) Lack of a church program of social activities for the young people.

Let us consider the experiences at Fairview in the light of these handicaps. It is evident that circumstances are different.

(1) The original immigration was so great that in spite of the large number of dissatisfied persons who moved away, a substantial number remained.

(2) The church did not suffer from factionalism. The 1925 schism was so small in comparison to the total church membership that it had little effect on the congregation.

(3) Fairview always had a resident minister and most of the time there was an additional minister or two.

20 Winifred Nelson, *History of Mennonite Church at White Cloud, Michigan,* p. 3.
21 *Ibid.,* p. 10.

(4) Although Fairview also had soil of poor fertility, the farmers were alert to analyze their situation and discover the adjustments necessary for new soil and climatic conditions.

(5) The Fairview community was quite compact, and the people lived comparatively near the meetinghouse. This promoted a group solidarity that is difficult to achieve where Mennonites are a minority group widely dispersed among other peoples.

(6) The problem of holding the young people was never great, although some did leave never to return. Most of the young men took up farming, and land was usually available. In the 1920's non-Mennonites in the community occasionally left their farms and went to the city for employment. This left more land to the Mennonites. A few young people moved to the Midland, Michigan, Mennonite community and obtained employment in the Dow Chemical Works and other industries there. Midland is 100 miles from Fairview. The temptation for young people at Fairview to seek employment in industry was greatly reduced by the mere fact that there were no near-by cities; industries were simply too far away, unless one was willing to cut loose entirely from his home background, a step which most were not willing to take.

(7) The many young people's activities provided through the Fairview Church have done much to hold the young people. The objectives of these activities were more than merely social. In fact the religious activities seemed to do most to challenge the young people to become active church workers.

In addition to these factors which made for success, a few others can be made by way of final summary:

(1) When times were difficult, there was a strong determination on the part of a number of people to make success out of failure, to overcome the odds against them, come what may. Without this determination no community can find the will to face problems rather than move away from them.

(2) Strong leadership, among both the ministry and the laity, did much to guide the community into a program of constructive religious and social community building.

(3) There was an eagerness to obtain the help and guidance of agricultural experts for the solution of the agricultural problems at hand.

(4) Lastly, there was the realization that a strong church cannot be developed without a satisfactory degree of economic stability. The realization of this fact, no doubt, was an important factor in successfully meeting the time of crisis, and in steering the Fairview community along the road to stability.

THREE SWISS BRETHREN TRACTS

TRANSLATED AND EDITED BY JOHN C. WENGER

A PLEA TO SHUN STATE CHURCH SERVICES

THE MENNONITE QUARTERLY REVIEW has already published a number of Swiss Brethren tracts from a *Sammelband* collection.[1] The present item is the seventh in the collection and is entitled: *Von hörung der falschen Propheten oder Widerchristen.* By false prophets and antichrists the writer means teachers of religion who are not true to the pure Word of God and as such are opponents of Christ. These false teachers, whether Catholic or Protestant, were regarded by the Swiss Brethren as guilty of defending such unscriptural institutions as a state church and infant baptism. Both the Catholics and the Lutherans of the sixteenth century enjoyed, to be sure, a large following, but this our Swiss Brethren author considered a sure testimony to his charge that their leaders were false prophets. Everything was working out once again just as it did in the days of Israel: the true prophets of God's Word were maligned and persecuted, while the false prophets who teach mere human ideas and opinions were revered and followed by great numbers of people. In other words, the Swiss Brethren were more radical in their reformation than were the Lutherans or even the Reformed: all human practices and teachings had to go; only the Word of God may be taught. Revelation stands, but tradition must be rejected.[2]

The "false prophets," however, serve as effective instruments to separate the true Christians from the apostate believers of the state churches because there must be a clear line of separation. The *Süsse teig Christi,* declares our author, has nothing in common with the *Sawerteig* of the "Pharisees and Sadducees" (those state churchmen who add tradition to divine revelation[3]). Furthermore there are many people who refuse to break with the state churchmen because they hope by an outward conformity to escape the cross of Christ, the persecution of the false prophets. But such a policy

1 Item 1, "The Schleitheim Confession of Faith," XIX, 4 (October, 1945), 243-253; Item 4, "Concerning the Satisfaction of Christ," XX, 4 (October, 1946), 243-254; 5. "Concerning Divorce," XXI, 2 (April, 1947), 114-119; 6. "Two Kinds of Obedience," XXI, 1 (January, 1947), 18-22.

2 Cf. my chapter, "Theology of the Mennonites," in *Glimpses of Mennonite History and Doctrine,* Herald Press, Scottdale, Pennsylvania, 1947, especially 149ff.

3 The Swiss Brethren often spoke contemptuously of the state churchmen, calling them "Pharisees" or "scribes"; cf. *The Mennonite Quarterly Review,* XX, 4 (October, 1946), p. 247, note 19; and XXI, 1 (January, 1947), p. 20, note 9.

of compromise, failing to dare to be a nonconformist, is fatal, says our author. It is like drinking poison and hoping to escape the consequences, or eating fruit to find out if it really would kill a person. While the Bible does promise angelic support if one falls, it also clearly warns us not to tempt the Lord our God. Dinah tried to mingle with the wicked neighbors of godly Jacob and paid dearly for not being a nonconformist.

The entire tract is a call to withdraw from apostate Christendom and refuse all spiritual fellowship with those who evade persecution by running after the false prophets.[4] Such separation is both Christian and prudent, for Christ demands it, and to refuse to separate is to expose oneself to certain spiritual ruin.

The authorship and date of writing of the tract are uncertain. The radical criticism of the religious parties of the time would suggest the earliest period of Swiss Brethren history, perhaps as early as the first five years, 1525-1530. The fact that the author mentions the Lutherans rather than the Reformed may point to a South German rather than a Swiss writer. T. J. van Braght, 1625-64, the Dutch martyrologist, was familiar with the tract and believed that it came from the pen of Michael Sattler[5] (†1527). Van Braght probably based his belief on the fact that several other tracts in the *Sammelband* were written by Sattler. That Sattler was the author is indeed plausible but it nevertheless remains a conjecture.

The text of the tract follows:

THE HEARING OF FALSE PROPHETS OR ANTICHRISTS

That which love both for God and for one's neighbor prohibits or binds, —and on the contrary all that is mine is hostile[6] (Matt. 5)—he who is a true Christian will not set aside nor wish to be free of. But now love commands (Matt. 7, 16) one to beware of the false prophets who come to us in sheep's clothing (that is, attached to the letter) and who will indeed not allow [the people] to follow freely but will bring them into subjection with the hypocrisy which they create.[7] Yea, and what does God complain of more vigorously through almost all the prophets than that His people refuse to hear Him, but run after the false prophets who have nothing to offer them

[4] Cf. The Schleitheim Confession of 1527, *The Mennonite Quarterly Review,* XIX, 4 (October, 1945), 249.

[5] *The Bloody Theater or Martyrs' Mirror,* Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, Pennsylvania, 1938, 420.

[6] The first portion of the first sentence is obscure: "Was die lieb beyd gegen Gott vnd dem nechsten verbeut vnnd bindet / will vnnd allem dem / so die meinen entgegen ist / feindt ist Matth. 5) . . . ."

[7] The writer seems to refer to compulsory outward religious practices required of the laity and which were in effect substitutes for personal obedience to Christ and His Word. It is a well-known fact that the state clergy did not believe in freedom of conscience.

except the dreams and opinions of their own hearts (Jer. 23, 27; Ezek. 13). But would we expect the lambs of Christ to hearken to the voice of the hireling (John 10)? Would one indeed find the living Christ with the desolation and abomination of the dead Pharisees and scribes (Luke 24)? Should not a people seek unto their God (Isaiah 8)[8]? But should one seek the living among the dead (Matt. 26)[9]? How does the sweet flour of Christ [agree] with the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees (Mark 16)[10]? What concord hath Christ with Belial? And [what agreement hath] the temple of God with idols (II Cor. 6)? Or the yoke of Christ and that of the antichrist (Matt. 13).[11] It would then be the case that idols might speak the Word of God, although it is written, The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. Eyes have they but they see not, a mouth have they but they speak not, etc. (Psalm 115). What profiteth the image that its maker hath carved? and the idol which manifests fraud,—upon which its maker trusteth, so that he maketh dumb idols? Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; and to the dumb stone, Stand up, it shall teach something! Behold, it is laid over with silver and gold, and there is no breath in it (Hab. 2). It would then be the case that both the papists and Lutherans, yea all others also of their kind, preachers who proclaim letter for spirit, yea human commands for God's commandment,[12] and yet preach Christ so openly to such people; Ye generation of vipers, how can ye speak the good when ye are evil, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh (Matt. 12)? For this reason therefore He also saith, Beware of the scribes who come to you in long garments, who receive greetings in the market, and take the chief seats in the synagogs,[13] and the higher tables, and who devour widows' houses, etc. (Mark 12). Therefore Paul also says, Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision, etc. (Phil. 3). But everywhere it is said (so that one may indeed escape the persecution of the false prophets and avoid the cross) that such prohibition of love does not forbid a bodily following but only the attachment and consent of the heart. Therefore it is written, Prove all things, hold fast that which is good (I Thes. 2). *Answer*: whatever man would wantonly[14] and knowingly imbibe poison, imagining that his skill would prevent his being harmed, and would perish by his sportive act,[14a]—surely everyone would say that he perished by his wanton behavior. Whatever man would see openly before his eyes the fruit of an evil tree, or would see that many people died by eating of a certain food, and then would wish first of all to test the tree or the food as to whether they were evil or good, and would thereby poison himself,—surely every one would say that such a person had perished justly.[15] Or would it be good, if a shepherd should, after a wolf had come among his sheep on two successive days and done great damage, on the third day make

8 Isaiah 8:19b.

9 Luke 24:5.

10 Matthew 16:6-12. There appear to be several typographical errors in the references given in the text of the tract.

11 Matthew 11:29, 30.

12 The Swiss Brethren felt that in their rejection of a state church and of infant baptism they had rejected human inventions in favor of obedience to the plain Word of God.

13 ". . . inn den Schulen. . . ."

14 I have employed the English words "wanton" and "wantonly" as renderings of the German word *Mutwilliglich*.

14a ". . . vbersehe aber die Schetz vnnd verdürbe / . . . ."

15 "Das solcher billich vmb kommen were."

the wolf the keeper of the sheep in the hope that this time he would behave himself properly? He who (after being sufficiently informed of evil) through a wanton running after it wishes to make his own investigation, let him see to it that he does not plunge his neck into the pit which has been prepared, and perish wantonly in the prepared net. Everywhere the apostles of the angel of darkness are now speaking, presenting themselves as the apostles of Christ (II Corinthians 11), to all those who wish sincerely to walk in the way. These [sincere believers] ought to flee as birds to their mountain, for they bend their bow and lay their arrow upon it, so that in the darkness they may shoot the souls of the living and put them to death (Psalm 11). Indeed it does stand written, He shall give his angels charge over thee to bear thee up in their hands lest thou dash thy foot against a stone (Psalm 91), but it also stands written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God (Deut. 6). Had Dinah, Jacob's daughter, remained at home and not strolled out[15a] to see the daughters of the land she would not have become a courtesan (Genesis thirty-four). But if anyone has such a great desire to listen to prophets who are known and demonstrated to be false,[16] he is holding the very worst in his bosom. Insofar as he does not believe him he will be terrified by his ceaseless prattle[17] so that he will not know how to escape,—just as it is said, one dare not set the louse on the fur, it will soon be inside. For this reason it is Christian and prudent[18] in these most evil days to do as Christ says, Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall do great signs and wonders, insomuch that if it were possible they should deceive even the elect (Matthew twenty-four). The abomination is now becoming evident[19] in the holy place (Daniel 9, 11), and those who have posed for a long time as brethren are beginning to show openly their fury against the miserable, attacked flock of the Lord, so that by their own fruit, yea before all the world, they may be recognized and may make evident in deed that for a long time they have concealed themselves under the conceited[20] sheep's clothing of Scripture (Matthew 7). Yea, do thou as the Lord through Isaiah commands, saying, Go thou, O my people, into thy chamber and shut thy door after thee, and remain hidden there for a little while until the wrath be passed over (Isaiah 26). For yet a little while and he that shall come will come and will not tarry.[21] Now the just man shall live by his faith, but if any man draw back[22] my soul shall have no pleasure in him (Hebrews 10). Yea, He saith, If the righteous man turn away from his piety, and live unjustly so that he practices all the abominations of the godless, shall that man live?[23] (Ezekiel 18). But the

15a " . . ./ vñ nit aus gespacieret/. . . ."

16 ". . . wissentliche vnnd erweiste falschen Propheten zu zuhören/. . . ."

17 ". . . mit seinem vnauffhörenden geschwetz/. . . ."

18 "Christlich vnd nützlich."

19 "Der grewel wirt jetzund offentlich an der heiligen Statt geschene Danie. 9.11. Vnd die ein lange zeit sich auch Brüder haben lassen schelten / fangen an auch offentlich jren grimmen gegen der elenden zerstörete herde des Herrn zubeweisen/. . . ."

In his letter to the congregation at Horb, Michael Sattler wrote in 1527: "Pray that reapers may be constrained into the harvest; for the time of threshing is nigh at hand. Luke 10. The abomination of desolation is manifest among you. . . ."—*Martyrs' Mirror,* 1938 Edition, 420.

20 ". . . vnter den erstoltznen Schafskleidern der Schrift. . . ." The author means, the sheep's clothing condemned by Jesus in the Scripture; not, the clothing commanded by Scripture.

21 "verziehen."

22 "weichen."

23 Ja spricht er / wann der Gerecht seiner fromkeit absteht / vnd vnbillich

God of peace and the Father of mercy shall graciously deliver[24] both you and us from the present power of darkness and of the antichrist through the revelation of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.[25]

FOLLOW ONLY MEN OF THE WORD

The eighth item of the *Sammelband* is a tract which resembles superficially the seventh. It is printed without a title in the *Sammelband,* following immediately after the last line of "The Hearing of False Prophets" except for a blank line intervening.[26] But the Dutch edition of the tract-collection has the title, *Van boose Voorstanders,* undoubtedly derived from an original German title, *Von bösen Vorstehern.* Although at first sight this tract seems to have the same intent as that on the False Prophets, yet the purposes of the two tracts are distinctly different. By false prophets the writer means state churchmen in general, while by evil overseers he is designating certain individuals who stood much closer to his own group[27]—someone like Caspar Schwenckfeld, Sebastian Franck, Hans Denck, or Hans Bünderlin.[28] The author regarded these "false brethren" as a hazard to the spiritual welfare of his group because they depreciated the importance of a clear withdrawal from the state churches and of the observance of the ordinances. This attitude, he declares, shows "that they are in league with the Lutherans."

Again, the authorship and date of composition are unknown. Certain ideas, as will be noted in the footnotes, resemble Michael Sattler's writings. The attitude toward the Catholics and especially the Lutherans will seem unduly harsh to modern readers including Mennonites. But the sympathetic reader must put himself in the position of the Swiss Brethren in 1530. The state churchmen were employing fire, sword, and water to annihilate the Brethren; they were accusing them of every crime under heaven; and the Lutheran

handelt / das er alle grewel der Gottlosen vbet / solt der leben / Ezech. 18.

24 erlösen.

25 A manual of the Reformed Mennonite Church, a small exclusive Mennonite group, entitled *Christianity Defined,* Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 1940, contains a chapter on "Separation from Unfaithful Worship," written in the spirit of our tract. It contains one section entitled, "Teachers in Sheep's Clothing." Most groups of Mennonites today, however, are far less critical of their Protestant friends than either the original Anabaptists or the Reformed Mennonites. This is partially accounted for by the religious toleration of our era and by the fact that in the United States there is no state church.

26 As was noted in an earlier article Dr. Robert Friedmann found a manuscript copy of the Sammelband which had been copied by the Hutterian Brethren preserved in Schloss Mittersill in the Austrian Alps. *The Mennonite Quarterly Review,* XX, 4 (October, 1946), 244.

27 *The Mennonite Quarterly Review,* XVI, 2 (April, 1942), 91.

28 *Ibid.,* XII, 4 (October, 1938), 269.

clergy were former priests who had turned Protestant by the order of their princes (bishops), in many cases without a personal conversion and spiritual renewal. It should also be remembered that in sixteenth-century polemical writing there was no thought of courtesy toward one's opponents.

The text of the tract follows:

CONCERNING EVIL OVERSEERS[29]

Grace and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Among so many tribulations, dearest brethren and sisters in the Lord, which arise in our times is also this as it comes to us that so many overseers have become hindseers,[30] proclaiming that without being called they have arrived at an achieved service,[31] running without the command of the Lord. Meanwhile the tribulation against the truth rises daily, and the Lord, as man sees it, delays[32] His Coming. But they are not satisfied that they have been rejected in connection with the pound entrusted to them and with the work of the vineyard which they undertook[33] (just like their ancestors the Pharisees) but wish to return everything to the Lord which they got by usury; yea, to annul all the work which had been accomplished. They wish with their guilty death and weakness not only to put the weak to death but also to make the strong weak and to lead them astray by offending[34] them,—never regarding what Christ says in Matthew eighteen: Whoso offends one of these least who believe in me, or retards him,[35] it were better for him that a millstone be hanged about his neck and that he be sunk into the sea where it is the deepest.

They say that one may without harm hear the papish or Lutheran sermons, since they demand it, and in order not to offend anyone.[36] Nevertheless in Matthew twenty-four Christ earnestly commands us to flee from such desolation and abomination, and in no sense to turn back to them, but with true warning to meditate[37] on Lot's wife (Luke twenty-one). And Paul speaks with clear words in II Corinthians 6: Be ye not unequally yoked[38] together with unbelievers, for what fellowship hath piety with impiety, etc. I[39] will forbear to mention[40] how John, together with the prophets, so earnestly commands us to withdraw from such a Babylon[41]

[29] The title is taken from the Dutch edition of the Sammelband.

[30] ". . . das so viel vorsteher zu hindersteher werden/. . . ."

[31] ". . . zu geleistetem dienst komen/. . . ."

[32] ". . . /vnnd der Herre sein zukunfft (wie mans ansicht) verzeucht/. . . ."

[33] ". . . das sie am befohlenen pfundt vnd angenomner arbeit des Weinbergs zuschelmē worden sind/. . . ."

[34] ". . . vñ mit ergernus verwirren. . . ."

[35] ". . . oder hinderstellig macht/. . . ."

[36] "Sie sprechen / man möge one [ohne] schaden die Beptische order Lutherischen Predigt hören / dieweil man es ja haben wöl / vnd auff das man niemands ergere /. . . ."

[37] "zu gedencken."

[38] "Ziehent nicht am frembden joch mit den vnglaubigen / dañ was hat die fromkeit gemeinsame mit der vnfromkeit / etc."

[39] The employment of *Ich* is an indication of a single author. Cf. Michael Sattler; *The Mennonite Quarterly Review*, XIX, 4 (October, 1945), 248; also "The Satisfaction of Christ," *Ibid.*, XX, 4 (October, 1946), 247, note 18.

[40] "Ich geschweig / . . . ."

[41] Cf. "The Satisfaction of Christ," *M.Q.R.*, XX, 4 (October, 1946), 254.

that we may not be partakers of her plagues (Apocalypse eighteen; Isaiah fifty-two; and Jeremiah fifty-one).

But since they say, against themselves and against the truth, that infant baptism is an indifferent matter[42] and that one can baptize infants without detriment to the truth, it is certain that they are in league with the Lutherans, that they might perhaps escape the cross in the future;—just as if infant baptism were not flatly contradictory[43] to the baptism of Christ (Matthew seventeen) but belongs to the antichrist[44] or hireling (John ten). I[45] will not mention that the commandments of men are many times condemned[46] (Matt. 15; Col. 2; Tit. 1; II Cor. 6; Gal. 5). But is this not as Peter says, according to the proverb[47] that the dog has again devoured his vomit (II Pet. 2)? God however will root out and cut off such [people] since they have erred with such wantonness[48] in the house and temple of God. And how the Lutherans would like to escape this the more easily[49] (to speak according to the flesh), and also do more damage, for so they speak,—that they did this against the papacy with the word of faith! They did not do it by the command and call of God but from their own wantonness.[50] If for this reason they did everything wrong, as they both did and taught in this matter (just as did their fathers), now they say[51] that they did not know whether the baptism of John was of God or of men (Matt. 21). Nevertheless they say this against their own conscience.

[We][52] wish therefore to warn all brethren and sisters in the LORD (who have departed from the desolation and abomination through the truth they received) in order that you may not be led away from the hope placed before you through the false deceit and fickleness[53] of the overseers. And pray the Lord of the harvest that he may send forth faithful laborers into His work, yea that He may go out the eleventh hour and hire those for His vineyard who have stood idle all the day, in order that all which is still undone in the vineyard may be completed.

May[54] the Father of peace and of all mercy graciously keep both us and you from every error[55] through the intercession of His Son,[56] our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

42 ". . ./die Kindertauff seye mittelmessig/. . . ."

43 "gleich ob die Kindertauff nicht richtig wider den Tauff Christi were/. . . ."

44 "Widderchrist."

45 Cf. notes 39 and 40.

46 "Manchfeltiglich verboten seind."

47 ". . ./nach inhalt des Sprichworts/. . . ."

48 ". . ./dieweil sie mit solchem frefel am haus vnnd Tempel Gottes sich vergrieffen /. . . ."

49 "gefüglicher."

50 "mutwillen."

51 ". . ./do sie sprachen / sie wisten nicht ob der Tauff Johannis. . . ."

52 The translator started a new paragraph here. The German sentence simply runs on thus: ". . . so sie doch solchs wider jre egene Gewissen redten / wöllen derhalben. . . ."

53 "wanckelmütigkeit."

54 "Der Vatter . . . wöll beyd vns vnnd euch . . . ."

55 ". . . vor allem jrsal."

56 "Kindes."

A RINCK EPISTLE

The ninth item in the *Sammelband* is a tiny epistle, printed on a single page. It was written by Melchior Rinck, an Anabaptist of Central Germany.[57] He was born in 1493 or 1494. As an Anabaptist he held a disputation with the theological faculty of the University of Marburg, August 17, 18, 1528. He was in prison 1529-31, but was free from May until November, 1531, when he was again imprisoned. In 1540 Martin Butzer, the Strasburg reformer, succeeded in having Rinck given a private cell in the prison. But so far as is known Rinck remained in prison until his death in 1545. Because of his learning he was called "The Greek."

Here is the text of his letter:

Grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Beloved in the Lord. Know we that I, Melchior Rinck, and Anthony[58] Jacob, brother in the Lord at Hayne,[59] imprisoned for the sake of the truth, are still vigorous and healthy[60] through the power of God Almighty; and we hope by the doctrine, baptism and communion of Christ, and by all else which pertains to Him, to persevere unto the end through the support and help of God, although the papish and Lutheran rabble[61] have for a long time tried to drive us from this faith.[62] May God deliver His own from the power of both parties.[63] Amen.

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

The last item in the *Sammelband* is a brief tract on baptism. It also is anonymous.[64] The writer condemns vigorously the state churchmen of his day, who are regarded as the instruments of Satan, upholding an unscriptural and persecuting state church.

The text of the tract follows:

NOTE

ALLOW THE CHILDREN TO COME TO ME, ETC. MARK 10.

Just as one cannot damn the children for unbelief, so one cannot pronounce them saved because of faith,[65] for one cannot preach to them

[57] Cf. Dr. Friedmann's remarks: *M.Q.R.*, XVI, 2 (April, 1942), 91, 92.

[58] "Anthonius Jacob." Might he have been identical with *der fromme Antonius von Köln?* Cf. J. ten Doornkaat Koolmann's article, "Antonius von Köln," in the *Mennonitisches Lexikon*, I, 76.

[59] Haina was a former monastery in Thuringia.

[60] "frisch vnd gesund."

[61] "Beptisch vnd Lutherus hauff."

[62] "vonn solchem vnterstaht abzutreiben."

[63] "Gott wölle die seinen aus beyder gewalt erlösen / Amen."

[64] Dr. Friedmann, however, holds that "the writer of the epistle introduces himself clearly" (as Rinck). This is indeed true of the epistle, but it is not evident to me that Rinck was the author of the tract on Baptism.

[65] "Gleich als man die Kindelein des vnglaubens halb nicht mag verdammen / also mag man sie auch nicht seligen des Glaubens halb/. . . ."

and they cannot hearken. And just as they neither know nor hate the evil, so are they without the knowledge and love of the good.[66]

He therefore who by nature "loves" the children, so that he calls the children of the Spirit "fanatics" and hates them, he therefore who by nature brings the children to Christ so that he will not allow the children of the rebirth to come to Christ, he does not love those who are children by nature but hates them, and brings them not to Christ but to Belial.[67] He wishes to receive through infant baptism what he never had, namely the blessing, and to escape that which is already hanging on his neck, namely the curse: because he loves the creature and himself in such a way that he rejects the Creator. Indeed, both the works-saints[68] and the scribes[69] fight vigorously for infant baptism,[70] not out of love for the children (for they are the very ones who devour the bread which belongs to the children and the poor orphans, and fatten themselves thereby) but out of roguery[71] rather, and force, to uphold a false Christendom which they all got through setting up such a baptism. For Satan perceives well that as soon as a brotherhood[72] is set up in which obedience to Christ is manifested, not alone with mouth and heart but also with works and love,[73] his darkness cannot stand any longer before such light, for it will be evident that his "gospel" and Christendom are the desolate abomination.[74] And how would a city[75] be more quickly ruined and a sheepfold more quickly laid waste than for a person to allow the enemy of the city to be in it in his young years, to bring him up in the city (so that he learns all the arrangement[76] of the city) until he should come to years and wage war against the city, not from the outside in (then a person could not take it)[77] but from the inside out (then a city could not stand)? Would not one wish to bring such an enemy out of the city (after not the smallest portion of the citizens or anyone else had adhered to him, because of fear[78])? Or, apart from pardon by the city would one keep such a person with him? If a shepherd would take young wolves, lions, or bears into the sheepfold and bring them up with the sheep, would they not finally (after they grew up) ruin both shepherd and sheep? Yea they would themselves wish to be shepherd and sheep. And indeed the scribes[79] now go and drive out of their

66 That is, infants are not moral agents, they are not accountable to God.

67 Infant baptism is here described as an abomination in the sight of God.

68 Roman Catholics. Cf. the tract, "The Satisfaction of Christ," *M.Q.R.*, XX, 4 (October, 1946), 252, note 37.

69 The Protestant reformers.

70 ". . . so hefftig vber der Kindertauff fechten/. . . ."

71 "schalckheit."

72 "gemein."

73 The fact that "faith without works is dead" was a capital point with the Brethren.

74 Note the eschatological flavor of these Swiss Brethren tracts.

75 "ein Statt." I am assuming that the author means "Stadt."

76 "alle gelegenheit."

77 ". . . (da man jhr nichts möcht angewinnen) . . . ." "Angewinnen" is middle high German for "gewinnen or "erlangen" (Zieglschmid).

78 ". . ./ möcht man hinden nach auch solchen feind (nach dem er nicht das geringste theil der Bürger / oder jemand doaussen / daruor sich die Statt vor forchte an sich gehenckt hette) aus der Statt bringen?"

79 The letter S (for Schrifftgelerten) is visible but because the corner of the page is broken off the following nine letters are missing. But the Dutch edition of the *Sammelband*, as reprinted in *Bibliotheca Reformatoria Neerlandica*, V, 644, gives the equivalent "Schriftgeleerden."

fellowship[80] those whom they know to be wolves, bears and[81] lions, so will they learn well that the situation is created by infant baptism.[82] But the dogs[83] will not do it, since they have also become dumb, and the sheep themselves rather undertake it with more fury (than before) and what they are not able to do they ask help of the lions[84] with much entreaty, beseeching them to remain door-servants so that they may not get the upper hand. May[85] God graciously deliver the sheep of His pasture out of all their hands. Amen.

THE END

[80] The first letter of "gemein or "gemeinde" alone remains, but the Dutch reads, "Gemeynte."

[81] The "vnd" is missing, but the Dutch reads, "ende."

[82] ". . ./so werden sie wol erfaren / was der Kindertauff zu wegen hab bracht /. . . ." The writer seems to assume that the Reformers would wish to remove from their state churches the unconverted gross sinners who had been christened as infants.

[83] Cramer and Pijper interpret the "dogs" to refer to the Protestant clergy ("De predikanten").—Bibl. Ref. Neerlandica, V, 644, note 2).

[84] Does the Brethren author mean that the Protestants fall back on the civil authorities for help in subduing their gross sinners?

[85] Gott wölle die Schafe seiner Weide gnediglich aus jrer aller hand (hend?) erlösen / AMEN. ENDE.

MENNONITE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, 1944-1947

SILAS HERTZLER

The Mennonite elementary school idea has been revived in recent years in the Mennonite Church. As far as the writer has been able to determine, the first of these schools was the Mennonite Private School, started at Dover, Delaware, in 1925. The Greenwood Mennonite School began at Greenwood, Delaware, in 1928. The Green Hill Mennonite Private School opened its doors first in 1933, at Cheswold, Delaware. The Esh School at Ronks, Pennsylvania, came into being in 1938. The Locust Grove Mennonite School began in 1939. This school is located near Smoketown, Pennsylvania. The Oak Grove or Zook School also opened in East Lampeter Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in 1939. The New Danville Mennonite School, located on Route 4, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, started in 1940.

In 1941 there were three new schools. These were the Mt. Pleasant Mennonite School, Fentress, Virginia; the West Fallowfield Mennonite School, Atglen, Pennsylvania; and the Cross Roads School, Springs, Pennsylvania. The Warwick River School, Denbigh, Virginia, was started in 1942. The new school in 1943 was the Mt. Carmel School, Route 1, Harrisonburg, Virginia. Recently the idea of elementary schools has spread rapidly, for there were seven new schools started in 1944. These were the Bethel Springs School, Culp, Arkansas; the Crown Hill Mennonite School, Marshallville, Ohio; the Fountain Nook School, Apple Creek, Ohio; the Johnstown Mennonite School, Route 2, Hollsopple, Pennsylvania; the Linville Hill Mennonite School, Route 1, Paradise, Pennsylvania; the Maple Grove School, Apple Creek, Ohio; and the Springdale School, Route 2, Waynesboro, Virginia.

In September, 1945, the following elementary schools opened their doors for the first time: Deep Creek Mennonite School, Route 3, Portsmouth, Virginia; Elida Mennonite Christian Day School, Elida, Ohio; Franconia Mennonite Day School, Souderton, Pennsylvania; Kishacoquillas Valley Christian Day School, Belleville, Pennsylvania; Manor Mennonite School, Millersville, Pennsylvania; the Nampa Mennonite School, Nampa, Idaho.

A few less new schools began in 1946. These were: the Ephrata Mennonite Christian Day School, Route 3, Ephrata, Pennsylvania; Hillside Amish Mennonite School, Route 1, Meyersdale, Pennsylvania; Kempsville Mennonite School, Princess Anne,

Virginia. These are all Christian day schools, as contrasted with the secular public schools. In most cases only the work of the eight grades of the elementary school is offered. However, ten schools also do give a little high-school work, for a few pupils.

The tables which follow, summarize the attendance statistics in the elementary grades and in the high school. In 1944-45 there was a total attendance of 835 in nineteen schools. Of this number, 44 were in high school and 791 were in the first eight grades. In 1945-46 there were twenty-five elementary schools, with an attendance of 1107. The increase was largely in the elementary field, though there were 54 boys and girls registered in the high school.

Twenty-eight schools are included for the year 1946-47. Total attendance was considerably increased and reached 1445. Of these, 1349 were in the elementary field, and 96 were in high school. Table I gives the name of each school, the year of opening, and the exact number of pupils attending, for each of the three years included in the study. Separate columns are included for the elementary grades and for the high school. Table II arranges in exact detail the number of pupils in each of the eight grades of the elementary school, for each of the three years covered by this study. Table III gives the same details for the pupils attending high school in the schools where a high-school department operated. Johnstown is the only school in this group where there were students beyond the sophomore year. Table IV gives the number of boys, and the number of girls attending, for each of the three years 1944-45 to 1946-47. These statistics are accurate, except that for one school, only the total is given. The facts available did not give all the information necessary. Table V gives this same information for students on the high-school level. On the elementary level, for each year except one, the number of boys slightly exceeds the number of girls. For the secondary school years, the number of girls is slightly larger than the number of boys for two of the three years.

TABLE I

Total Enrollment in Mennonite Schools

School	Year of opening	Elementary Grades			High School			Total		
		1944-45	1945-46	1946-47	1944-45	1945-46	1946-47	1944-45	1945-46	1946-47
Bethel Springs School	1944	33	37	31		6	10	33	43	41
Cross Roads School	1941	23	24	34				23	24	34
Crown Hill Mennonite School	1944	22	28	40			8	22	28	48
Deep Creek Mennonite School	1945		20	32					20	32
Elida Menn. Christian Day School	1945		54	62					54	62
Esh School	1938	30	34	39				30	34	39
Ephrata Menn. Christian Day School	1946			68			3			71
Fountain Nook School	1944	51	40	49				51	40	49
Franconia Mennonite Day School	1945		81	133					81	133
Green Hill Mennonite School	1933	47	32	21				47	32	21
Greenwood Mennonite School	1928	48	48	49	9	7	10	57	55	59
Hillside Amish Mennonite School	1946			25						25
Johnstown Mennonite School	1944	65	83	100	12	19	26	77	102	126
Kempsville Mennonite School	1946			19						19
Kishacoquillas Valley Chr. Day School	1945		28	75			8		28	83
Linville Hill Mennonite School	1944	46	43	40				46	43	40
Locust Grove Mennonite School	1939	107	110	107				107	110	107
Manor Mennonite School	1945		37	50			4		37	54
Maple Grove Mennonite School	1944	33	29	29				33	29	29
Mennonite Private School	1925	21	22	23				21	22	23
Mt. Carmel School	1943	25	23	26				25	23	26
Mt. Pleasant Mennonite School	1941	37	29	25	9	11	10	46	40	35
Nampa Mennonite School	1945		15	17					15	17
New Danville Mennonite School	1940	54	69	78	6		11	60	69	89
Oak Grove Mennonite School	1939	32	35	35				32	35	35
Springdale School	1944	18	33	44				18	33	44
Warwick River Church School	1942	51	58	55				51	58	55
West Fallowfield Mennonite School	1941	48	41	43	8	11	6	56	52	49
Total		791	1053	1349	44	54	96	835	1107	1445

TABLE II

Enrollment by Classes, Mennonite Elementary Schools

School	Grade I			Grade II			Grade III			Grade IV			Grade V			Grade VI			Grade VII			Grade VIII			Total		
	1944-45	1945-46	1946-47	1944-45	1945-46	1946-47	1944-45	1945-46	1946-47	1944-45	1945-46	1946-47	1944-45	1945-46	1946-47	1944-45	1945-46	1946-47	1944-45	1945-46	1946-47	1944-45	1945-46	1946-47	1944-45	1945-46	1946-47
Bethel Springs	11	3	4	2	6	4	4	7	3	4	5	7	2	4	4	2	2	4	4	1	3	4	9	2	33	37	31
Cross Roads	1	2	2	4		3	4	6		4	5	6	4	4	5		4	8	3	1	7	3	2	3	23	24	34
Crown Hill	3	6	2	2	3	6	4	4	3	1	5	4	5		5	2	6	1	2	2	13	3	2	6	22	28	40
Deep Creek		7	5		2	10		4	2		1	7		1	1		4	1		1	6					20	32
Elida		10	7		7	15		5	10		9	5		8	8		7	8		3	5		5	4		54	62
Esh	3	4	6	4	5	3	4	2	7	4	7	2	1	4	8	8	3	5	2	7	2	4	2	6	30	34	39
Ephrata			7			10			7			10			10			4			10			10			68
Fountain Nook		3	3	6	5	11				8	3	2	3	3	5	6	4	4	5	4	3	23	18	21	51	40	49
Franconia		16	26		15	16		11	20		6	13		12	13		9	19		12	12			14		81	133
Green Hill	4	3	5	7	4	3	4	6	4	9	2	4	7	6	4	5	4		7	4	1	4	3		47	32	21
Greenwood	6	4	7	3	6	5	6	4	6	8	5	5	8	10	8	1	6	9	12	2	7	4	11	2	48	48	49
Hillside						2			2			4			4			3			2			8			25
Johnstown	10	14	13	11	12	14	6	13	15	9	7	10	6	11	10	8	8	13	6	10	12	9	8	13	65	83	100
Kempsville																											19[1]
Kischacoquillas		8	14			16		3	4		3	10			6		4	7		2	11		8	7		28	75
Linville Hill	9	3	4	4	8	4	5	4	8	8	4	5	5	8	4	2	5	7	7	2	5	6	9	3	46	43	40
Locust Grove	8	10	8	13	9	14	8	14	9	12	8	15	16	15	11	13	15	17	22	15	16	15	24	17	107	110	107
Manor		6	9		3	9		4	8		5	5		4	5		3	6		6	5		6	3		37	50
Maple Grove	4	2	3	6	4	2	4	5	4	1	1	5	2		3	3	1		2	3	4	11	13	8	33	29	29
Mennonite Private	5	3	3		5	3	2	1	4	4	1	1	5	4	4		5	5	5	1	3		2		21	22	23
Mt. Carmel	5	2	5		5		5		5		7		5		8	4	5	1	6	4	4			3	25	23	26
Mt. Pleasant	7	5	1	5	6	4	5	3	6	5	5	3	6	4	4	4	3	4	5	3	3				37	29	25
Nampa		3	5			2		2	1		1	1		3	2			2		4	1		2	3		15	17
New Danville	8	11	11	9	8	14	4	9	8	4	5	12	10	6	7	7	11	7	12	8	11		11	8	54	69	78
Oak Grove	4	4	7	4	4	5	5	4	3	4	5	5		5	4	10		5	4	9		1	4	6	32	35	35
Springdale	2	7	8	2	5	9	3	4	6	4	4	5	3	6	5	4	3	5		4	6				18	33	44
Warwick River	10	3	3	9	12	12	14	8	7	2	9	8	7	13	12	9	6	5		7	8				51	58	55
West Fallowfield	7	3	5	3	6	4	8	3	8	5	5	3	6	6	8	6	5	4	4	5	6	9	8	5	48	41	43
Total	107	142	173	94	140	200	95	126	160	96	118	157	101	137	168	94	123	154	108	120	166	96	147	152	791	1053	1349[2]

[1] 1947 *Mennonite Yearbook*, p. 33.

[2] Adding horizontally this total is 1330 because the grade level of the 19 Kempsville students is not available.

TABLE III

Enrollment by Classes, Mennonite High Schools

School	Freshmen			Sophomores			Juniors			Seniors			Total		
	1944-45	1945-46	1946-47	1944-45	1945-46	1946-47	1944-45	1945-46	1946-47	1944-45	1945-46	1946-47	1944-45	1945-46	1946-47
Bethel Springs		6	6			4								6	10
Crown Hill			8												8
Ephrata			3												3
Greenwood	4	5	6	5	2	4							9	7	10
Johnstown	6	8	8	4	5	10	2	4	4		2	4	12	19	26
Kishacoquillas			8												8
Manor			4												4
Mt. Pleasant	6	5	5	3	6	5							9	11	10
New Danville	6		11										6		11
West Fallowfield	5	3	3	3	8	3							8	11	6
Total	27	27	62	15	21	26	2	4	4		2	4	44	54	96

TABLE IV

Boys and Girls, Mennonite Elementary Schools

School	Boys			Girls			Total		
	1944-45	1945-46	1946-47	1944-45	1945-46	1946-47	1944-45	1945-46	1946-47
Bethel Springs	14	10	11	19	27	20	33	37	31
Cross Roads	11	14	15	12	10	19	23	24	34
Crown Hill	11	13	21	11	15	19	22	28	40
Deep Creek		7	11		13	21		20	32
Elida		26	37		28	25		54	62
Esh	14	17	19	16	17	20	30	34	39
Ephrata			27			41			68
Fountain Nook	31	19	22	20	21	27	51	40	49
Franconia		36	62		45	71		81	133
Green Hill	22	19	13	25	13	8	47	32	21
Greenwood	19	23	23	29	25	26	48	48	49
Hillside			12			13			25
Johnstown	35	40	52	30	43	48	65	83	100
Kempsville									191
Kishacoquillas		18	43		10	32		28	75
Linville Hill	28	24	20	18	19	20	46	43	40
Locust Grove	60	60	48	47	50	59	107	110	107
Manor		20	24		17	26		37	50
Maple Grove	17	12	16	16	17	13	33	29	29
Mennonite Private	10	13	11	11	9	12	21	22	23
Mt. Carmel	8	8	13	17	15	13	25	23	26
Mt. Pleasant	13	14	11	24	15	14	37	29	25
Nampa		5	6		10	11		15	17
New Danville	32	41	46	22	28	32	54	69	78
Oak Grove	17	20	17	15	15	18	32	35	35
Springdale	12	22	28	6	11	16	18	33	44
Warwick River	25	27	26	26	31	29	51	58	55
West Fallowfield	27	25	26	21	16	17	48	41	43
Total	406	533	660	385	520	670	791	1053	1349[2]

[1] 1947 *Mennonite Yearbook*, p. 33.

[2] Adding horizontally this total is 1330 because the grade level of the 19 Kempsville students is not available.

TABLE V

Boys and Girls, Mennonite High Schools

School	Boys			Girls			Total		
	1944-45	1945-46	1946-47	1944-45	1945-46	1946-47	1944-45	1945-46	1946-47
Bethel Springs		2	3		4	7		6	10
Crown Hill			4			4			8
Ephrata			1			2			3
Greenwood	5	3	3	4	4	7	9	7	10
Johnstown	4	7	12	8	12	14	12	19	26
Kishacoquillas			8						8
Manor			3			1			4
Mt. Pleasant	7	8	8	2	3	2	9	11	10
New Danville	3		6	3		5	6		11
West Fallowfield	2	6	2	6	5	4	8	11	6
Total	21	26	50	23	28	46	44	54	96

BOOK REVIEW

War, Peace, and Nonresistance. By GUY FRANKLIN HERSHBERGER, Professor of History and Sociology, Goshen College. Scottdale, Pennsylvania: The Herald Press, 1944. Pp. xv, 415. Select bibliographies, twelve appendixes, and general index. $2.50.

War, Peace, and Nonresistance, published three years ago, is now in its second printing and continues to be received favorably by Mennonites and non-Mennonites alike. Very few, if any, books by Mennonite authors have received as many widely scattered reviews as has this volume. Over fifty have appeared in the publications of learned societies, in journals of religion, and in various other publications.

With only a few exceptions the reviews have been favorable. Words and phrases such as "comprehensive," "authoritative," "very ample," "well-written," "solidity, consistency, and honesty," "calm, sober, careful, well-documented, well-rounded, lucidly written," "a contribution to American church history," and "well planned, skillfully executed, temperately phrased" appear often in these analyses of Professor Hershberger's book.

In his preface, the author stated, "The present volume has been written in the hope that it may assist the Mennonite people themselves, as well as the general public, to a better understanding of their faith and life." Judging from the reviews of the book, one concludes that this objective is being reached. The present reviewer predicts that for decades to come this volume will continue to be the standard history and interpretation of nonresistance as it has been practiced and understood by the Mennonites.

A book such as this could have been written only by some one with a broad knowledge of world history, an understanding of political philosophy, a wide acquaintance with current economic and social problems, and a genuine familiarity with the teachings of the Old and New Testaments. Professor Hershberger has this training. He has read widely in these fields, as his bibliography shows. These areas of knowledge serve as a background against which he presents the drama of four hundred years of Mennonite nonresistant living.

This is a book with a definite point of view and a deep conviction. Briefly it is this:

> Once the premise is accepted that Christ speaks with authority from heaven, only one thing remains, and that is to obey His command. There may be times when some other course seems more practical, more reasonable, or socially more useful. It often happens, however, that the way which from a human point of view seems best, in the end proves to have been wrong. The Book of Proverbs says: "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." The true disciple believes this truth so firmly that he follows Christ even though the entire world seems to be against him. Knowing that human reason has often gone astray, he hitches his wagon to the star of divine revelation, and leaves the results in the hands of God. Such obedience is not a blind obedience. Christian faith is not a blind faith. It is belief based on evidence. And to the nonresistant Christian the evidence seems clear enough that the way of life prescribed by Christ is also the way which is best for human society. He is convinced that if he is true to his nonresistant profession he is not a parasite. P. 299.

After treating war in human history in his opening chapter, the author considers war and peace in the Old Testament. Accepting both the Old and New Testaments as a revelation from God to man, he frankly faces the dilemma that war is "commanded" in the Old but forbidden in the New. Finding it impossible to accept the thesis that God's nature and purposes for man have changed, he concludes that God's fundamental moral law has

always been a command to love one's fellow men and not to kill. The book assumes

> that the lower standards of the Mosaic civil code represent a temporary concession on the part of God to the lowered moral state and the spiritual immaturity of that time; a concession made necessary by the sin of man, and not by the will of God.

This explanation is not that of those Fundamentalists whose literal interpretation of the Old Testament passages leads them either to the conclusion that war was good in the Old Testament times and may still have His blessing in our day or that God has changed His nature and laws; nor is it that of the Modernist who believes that the Old Testament merely records what the writers believed God was commanding. Both groups, therefore, have criticized this chapter.

The author answers in advance the point of view of the first group but their criticisms show that they still find it difficult to believe that God "commanded" the Hebrews to make war when in so doing they committed sin. Professor Hershberger perhaps dismisses the second group above too easily without showing why he cannot accept their particular point of view, although later he does show why he considers the theology of the Modernist to be false and inadequate. Those who cannot agree with him would do well to heed the suggestion in the Foreword which states, "Those who disagree with this answer will, we believe, appreciate the sincerity of the author in his endeavor to seek a truly Scriptural and reasonable solution, and will find stimulus to a fresh and critical examination of their own answers."

Chapter III discusses nonresistance in the New Testament. Appendix I is really a supplement to this chapter, for in it are twelve pages of New Testament quotations showing the Biblical basis of this doctrine. The central point of the chapter is that Christianity is the way of love and that the Christian's first obligation is to follow Christ's way. This means that "His disciples should be willing to suffer injustice rather than to forsake the way of love."

The Christian's primary interest is in the kingdom of God and not in the state, whose purpose is to maintain order in an evil society. "Rulers of the state are ministers of God only in the sense that they help to bring evildoers to the consequence of their own evil, as required by God's law of cause and effect which operates in human society."

The Christian, however, must submit to the state even when he suffers injustices, provided he is not forced to do anything contrary to his own conscience.

> But the New Testament way is to aim at love, not at justice. In aiming at justice the result is frequently a selfish struggle for power, position, or wealth. In aiming at love, however, the result is often justice as well as love. But even if this result does not follow, the Christian must continue to love anyway, for according to the teaching of Christ His disciples should be willing to suffer injustice rather than to forsake the way of love.

In Chapter IV, the author shows the attitude of the early church to have been nonresistant and then explains how its opposition to war declined after the Roman Empire legalized the Christian religion. Going into the period of the Reformation, he explains the differing positions on war held by the Lutherans, Calvinists, and Anabaptists.

The next chapters summarize the history of the practice of nonresistance by the Mennonite Church, in Europe and America, during the past four centuries. Slowly the Mennonites who remained in western Europe surrendered their historic position opposing war but those who had migrated to Russia and America continued their witness with varying degrees of clarity.

The story, however, is more than the account of a people refusing to kill their fellow men. It is also a record of a positive program of relief to those suffering from war and to those in distress everywhere. It is a story of the building of prosperous communities in new areas to which they escaped as they fled from persecution or to which they migrated voluntarily. This account is presented in Chapter VIII.

"Nonresistance and the State in Modern Life" is the topic of Chapter X. "It is obvious that one cannot be nonresistant and resistant at the same time. One cannot be the sate's hangman and obey the Sermon on the Mount," states the author. Certain areas of service by modern states do not, however, involve the use of violence against evildoers. These functions the nonresistant Christian can perform, believes Hershberger.

Is the nonresistant Christian then a parasite? Showing that legislation and law enforcement in a democracy do not rise to higher levels than public opinion, the writer declares that the major contribution a Christian can make is to create a deep respect for the Creator's moral laws. The Christion will, therefore, constantly witness against the evils of war and the sins of injustice and selfishness that lead away from love and to human conflict.

The author would agree with J. M. Lalley in his recent *Faith and Force* that "real authority has its orgin in a superrational process of assent. It is not . . . a beneficent by-product of the hangman's rope, the torturer's rack, the soldier's bayonet, the policeman's club; it is the creation of the collective imagination and of a general faith." It is a far greater contribution, therefore, to be engaged in establishing this "general faith" than to be wielding the policeman's club, necessary though that may be at times in a sub-Christian society.

The two final chapters, XIII and XIV, carry this philosophy into practical situations. In his study of industrial conflict, Professor Hershberger shows that in the struggle for power, often methods are used which are utterly inconsistent with Christ's standard of love for all men. The Christian, therefore, must uphold such ideal standards of brotherhood that all will recognize there is a better way than industrial strife, unchristian competition for wealth and power, discrimination against those of other races, and nationalistic wars. No higher type of service than this can be given to society.

Many modern pacifists would insist upon a more aggressive program of action. They would favor direct action, although nonviolent, to bring injustice to an end and to secure the kind of legislation that would help prevent wars. In chapters XI and XII the author discusses these points of view under "Biblical Nonresistance and Modern Pacifism." Here again the author stresses that love must dominate all activities of the Christian; his desire for justice must be secondary. He believes that when pacifists participate in nonviolent direct action in order to end injustices, as for example when they picket a restaurant discriminating against Negroes, they are taking the "first step on the road which leads away from Christian nonresistance."

When Garrison demanded justice for the slaves, although personally opposing violence, he set in motion forces that ultimately had much to do with bringing on the Civil War. Sensing the relationship between coercive pressure campaigns and strife, the Mennonites have opposed the use of coercion except in a very limited way. Coercion here can well be defined in the words of Theodore Paullin in his *Introduction to Nonviolence* when he says it is "the use of either physical or intangible force to compel action

contrary to the will or reasoned judgment of the individual or group subjected to such force."

The author shows that in general the men in Mennonite Civilian Public Service camps were more inclined to oppose the use of nonviolent direct action techniques to obtain justice for themselves and for others than were the men in the Brethren and Friends camps. Furthermore, Mennonites generally did not oppose conscription as such. If they were conscripted to perform useful social services apart from army service, they submitted.

The appendixes are very useful. One summarizes the nonresistant's answers to various Scriptures that are often used by the advocates of war. Another answers the practical questions that are generally raised by those testing the convictions of pacifists. Others give various statements of faith and policy by different Mennonite groups who have spoken clearly on the application of nonresistance to modern situations. A thirteen-page general index as well as a detailed table of contents enhances the value of the book.

This volume should do much to strengthen the historic faith of the Mennonite Church in its witness against war and violence. It should also convince the wavering ones that this witness is not a negative one but that it calls for a positive expression of love and good will to all mankind, to friends and enemies, to those in positions of power, and to the downtrodden of all nations. This is not an unrealistic program; it is realism of the highest type because it is based upon the teachings of Jesus who was One with the Father before the foundations of the world were laid and who therefore was the Creator of those universal spiritual and moral laws which must be followed by any society which hopes to endure.

If Professor Hershberger does not answer finally all questions that arise and if the individual is called upon to live this way of life by faith rather than by logic alone, one replies that neither can those who uphold opposing philosophies answer all the questions that are asked of them.

It appears to the reviewer that the author has attempted to deal honestly and fairly with other points of view and has always tried to interpret these positions correctly. When he deals with the labor unions and their violent techniques, he shows in a sympathetic way why they have come to be what they are and the contributions they have made. When he disagrees with Gandhi, he lets this man and his friends speak for themselves and admits his admiration for them. Neither does he use offending language in his discussion of the militarists and their philosophy, even though they have so often misinterpreted and persecuted the Mennonites. Although the author expresses deep convictions, there is present no pharisaical pride. The book has the tone of modesty and humility becoming to a scholar and a Christian gentleman.

To raise a few problems at the end of this review is not to detract from the merit of this book. It is rather to stimulate additional study in the areas opened by the author. Is it not wrong to submit to injustice when our protests might end the injustices and therefore reduce the load of guilt resting upon the evildoer? Is it not possible to carry out direct nonviolent action in a spirit of love leading to reconciliation against one guilty of injustices? If nonresistance means that we should not bring coercive pressures to bear upon others, may that not mean that some social and spiritual pressures used in Mennonite communities and churches have been unchristian? Will not the logical end of the author's interpretation of nonresistance suggest anarchism as the ideal arrangement for a Christian community? If we cannot hold any government office that requires the use of coercion according to the above definition, what then is the answer

to the problems of government in a small geographic unit where every citizen is a believer in nonresistance but where differences of opinion on policies would inevitably arise? Is shunning in our Amish communities nonviolent direct action? Is it right for us to hand over to authorities evil-doers of our own numbers when we could not conscientiously mete out punishment to them? Is it ever right to accept voluntarily government services that we ourselves would refuse to do? Is it easily possible to separate society into sinful society and Christian society, admitting that no Christians are perfect and that sins are prevalent in their circles? Admitting that coercive government is necessary in a sinful society can the officer who performs a "necessary" function be regarded as guilty of evil-doing and therefore subject to divine punishment?

It may well be that the author has answered these questions more clearly than the reviewer believes he has. Furthermore, it was not necessarily his duty to go fully into all these problems. At any rate, one hopes Professor Hershberger will continue to direct his keen thinking into the area he has so ably handled in this excellent volume.

Mennonite Research Foundation Melvin Gingerich

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